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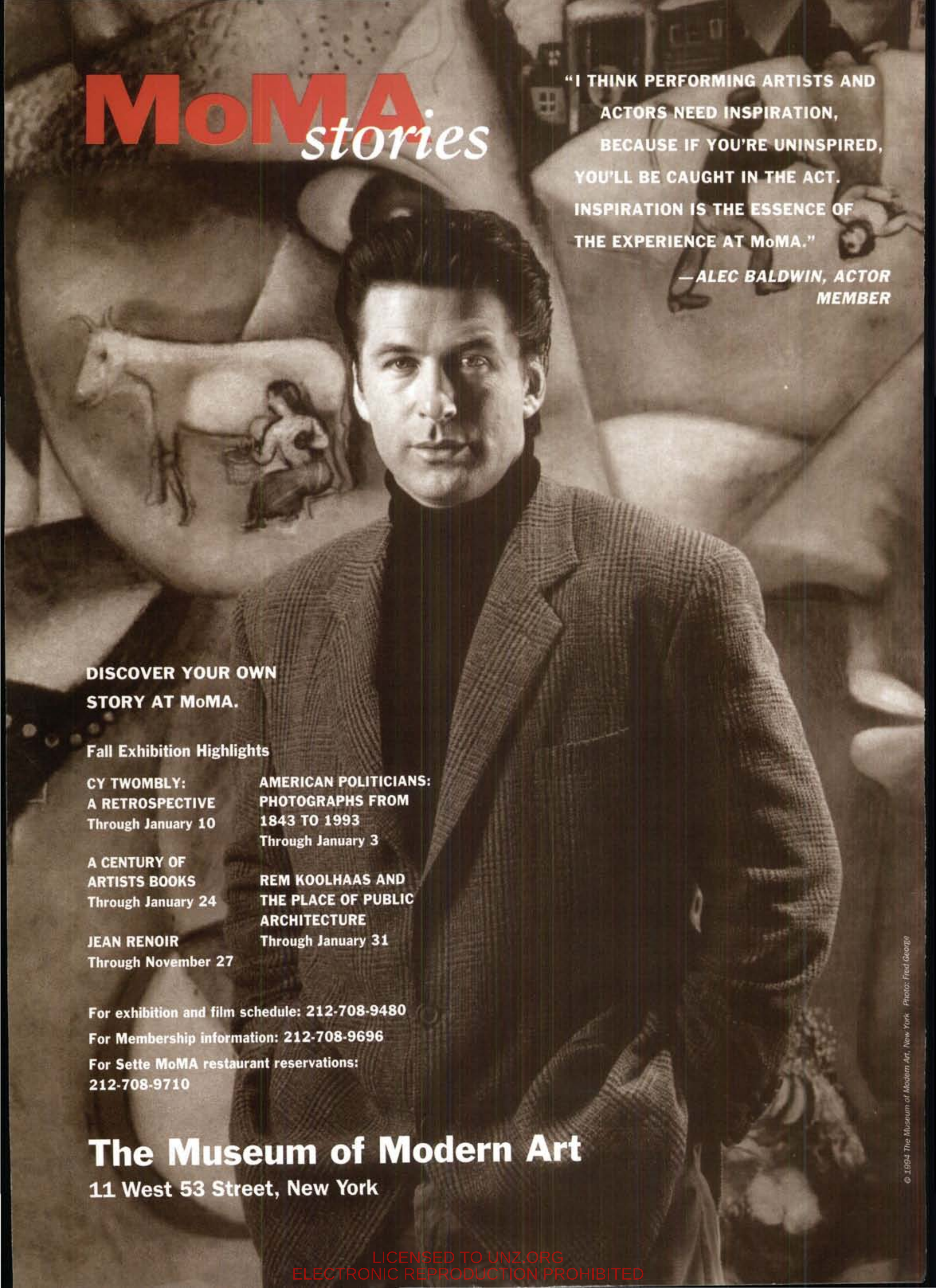

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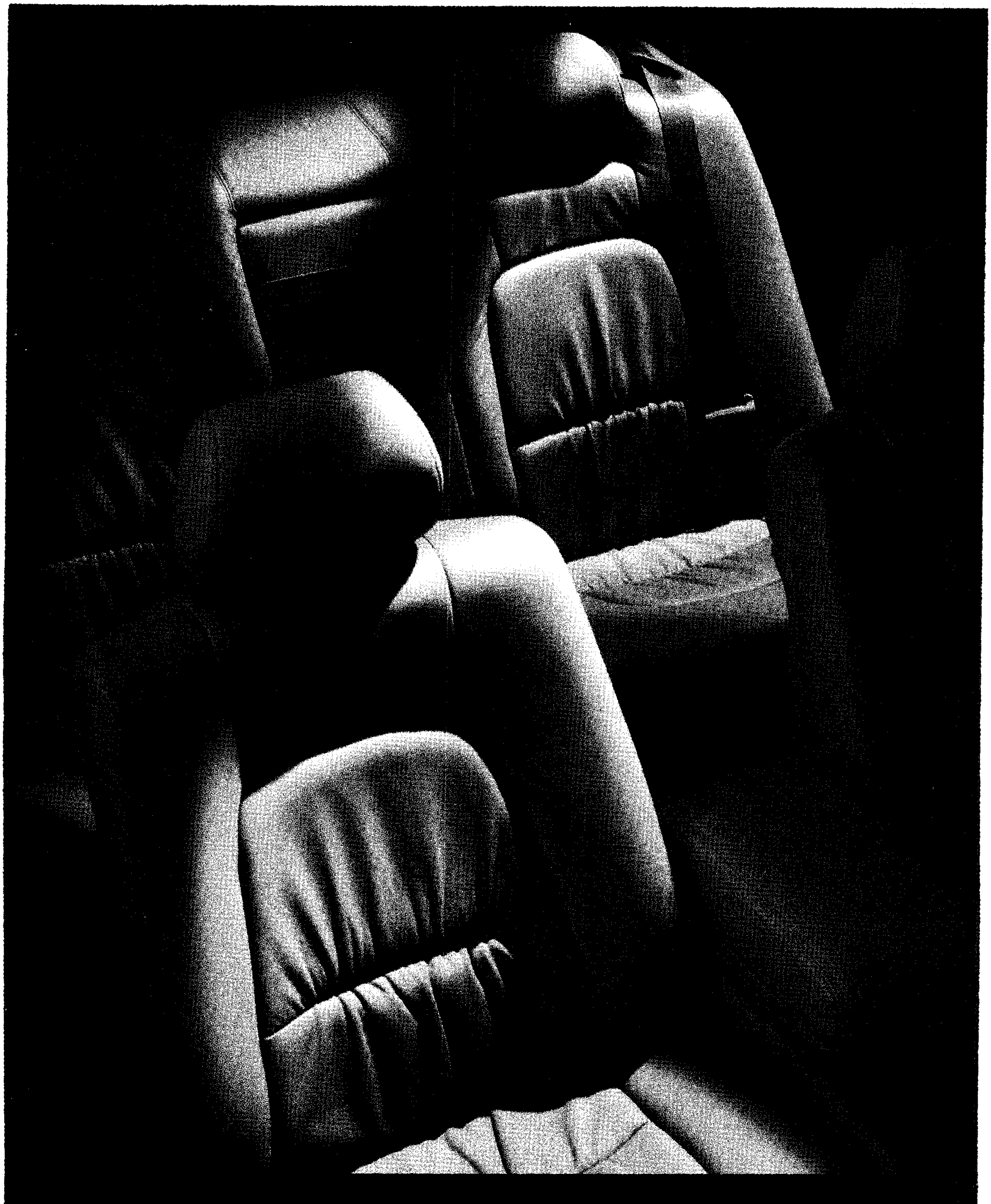

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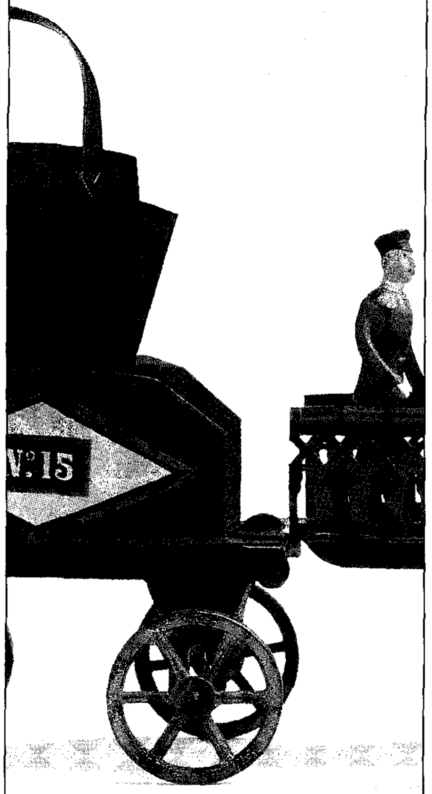

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NOVEMBER 21, 1994

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THE NEW YORKER (ISSN 0028-792X), published weekly (except for three combined issues: the last week of December and the first week of January, the last week of June and the first week of July, and the last two weeks of August) by The New Yorker Magazine, Inc., 20 W. 43rd St., N.Y., N.Y. 10036. Vol. LXX, No. 38, November 21, 1994. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. Authorized as second-class mail by the Post Office Department, Ottawa, Canada, and for payment of postage in cash. Canadian Publication Mail Sales Product Agreement No.190969. Canadian goods-and-services-tax registration number R123242885. Registered as a newspaper at the British Post Office. Subscription rates: In U.S. and possessions, one year, $32.00; two years, $52.00. In Canada, one year, $65.27 (includes G.S.T.). Other foreign, one year, $76.00, payable in advance.

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COMMENT

THE NEWT TESTAMENT

Mr. Gingrich threatens to speak power to truth.

WHEN eminence descended upon Newt Gingrich last week, he at once began wrestling with the flowing robes of responsibility, poking one arm through a sleeve while the other still gesticulated angrily. For the presumptive Speaker of the House—he will be the first Republican to hold that office since 1954—talk of conciliation and constructive coöperation appeared to be the order of the day. But Mr. Gingrich was unable to resist deriding President Clinton and his wife as "counterculture McGoverniks" and warning imperiously that the Administration would be "very, very dumb" to oppose his agenda, which is to include, he said, having schools teach the Declaration of Independence—with special attention to the word "Creator"—in its religious context (presumably not including Jefferson's deism or Paine's anti-clericalism).

Mr. Gingrich is a man of many theories, shifting and elaborate, about cybernetics, space exploration, market economics, and evangelical Christianity, bound together as a master "vision"—a favorite word. Several weeks before last Tuesday's election, in a speech before a small audience of conservatives at the Heritage Foundation, he had laid out his vision of "the battleground about the nature of the American future" as a struggle between the God-fearing and the godless. "I do have a vision of an America in which a belief in the Creator is once again at the center of defining being an American," he said, "and that is a radically different vision of America than the secular anti-religious view of the left. . . . Frankly, history is an ongoing rebuke to secular left-wing values. They can't afford to teach history, because it would destroy the core vision of a hedonistic, existentialist America in which there is no past and there is no future." The agonizing and baffling problems of illegitimacy, violence, and illiteracy, he went on, are beyond the reach of "secular politics." If he became Speaker, Mr. Gingrich promised that afternoon, he would introduce a constitutional amendment to authorize school prayer, with the express purpose of "reëstablishing the Creator at the center of the American polity." Mr. Gingrich contemplates a notion of legislative struggle that shades into the divine.

Mr. Gingrich's ascension may be seen

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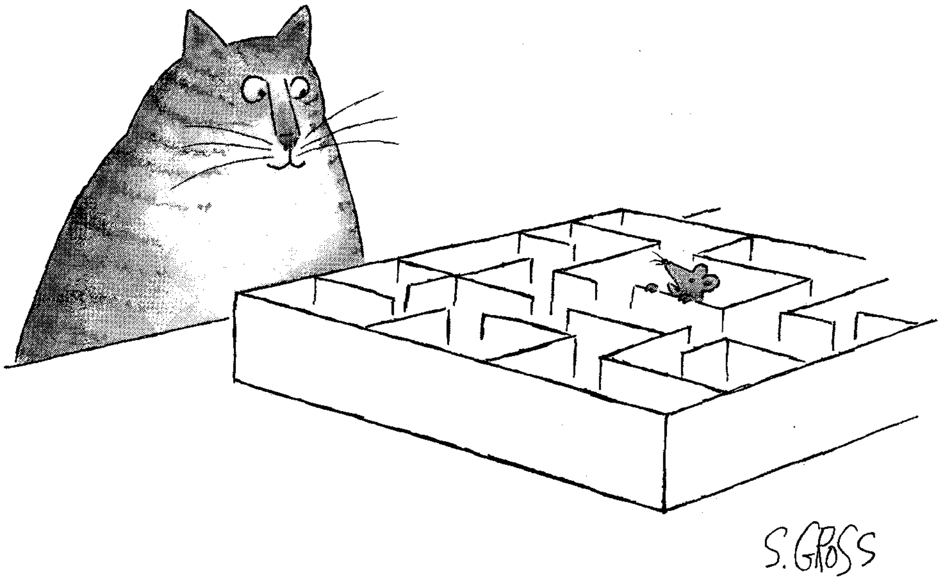

"Well, you don't look like an experimental psychologist to _me._*"*

• •

as the culmination of a long political shift—one that made its first appearance in the midterm elections of 1938, when almost every candidate endorsed by President Roosevelt went down to defeat. The Democrats lost eighty-one seats in the House and eight in the Senate. The Republicans proceeded to forge, for the first time, a coalition with Southern Democratic conservatives, and brought the New Deal, for all intents and purposes, to a halt. In 1946, with President Truman deeply unpopular, the Republicans again gained complete mastery of Capitol Hill, gaining fifty-five House and thirteen Senate seats. Even after the Democrats recaptured Congress, the conservative coalition held, thwarting the next Democratic President, John F. Kennedy, at almost every turn. It took the Presidency of the former Senate Majority Leader Lyndon Johnson to break the deadlock; but, with G.O.P. gains in 1966, the Great Society, like the New Deal in 1938, was ended.

Ever since Johnson and the civil-rights revolution, Southern conservatives have been migrating to the Republican Party. The midterm elections of 1994 were, among other things, the capstone of the Southern strategy launched in 1968 by Richard Nixon, which codified the fitful trend that had begun thirty years earlier. Now, another quarter century on, Mr. Gingrich's partisan appropriation of the Creator reflects not only the rise of the South in his party but also the rise of the Christian right within its Southern wing.

With the consolidation of Southern conservatism in the G.O.P., and the defeat of many centrist Democrats (who, because they tended to represent marginal districts, were disproportionately swept away by the Republican tsunami), both of America's congressional parties will be more ideologically homogeneous than ever. This tidiness may please some political scientists, but with the legislative and the executive branches now opposed in name as well as in fact it will do nothing to reduce the governmental paralysis underlying much of the legitimate frustration, impatience, and alienation that were so evident last Tuesday among voters and nonvoters alike. On the contrary, the fading of the need to build coalitions within the parties may well reduce the incentives for coalition-building across party lines, and so increase the potential for polarization between the parties. Paralysis, however, is a rough-and-ready means of fulfilling the ideological pledge of minimal government.

In this election cycle, no moderate Republicans have defected to the Democratic Party, though the midterm exposed signs of breakage, such as Mayor Giuliani's backing of Governor Cuomo and Los Angeles Mayor Richard Riordan's endorsement of Senator Dianne Feinstein. If coalitions are to be built, it is the remaining moderate Republicans in Congress who have the leverage. But movement toward coöperation on their part will not please the conservative majority. Moderate Republicans in the Senate are likely to be cast by Speaker Gingrich as heretics; he has often excoriated them, once calling the traditional conservative Robert Dole, soon to be Majority Leader of the Senate, "the tax collector for the welfare state."

When the Republican minority was catapulted into the majority in both houses of the Congress in 1946 and again in 1952, the bottled-up resentment of its right wing found expression in McCarthyism. (The pillars of the Western alliance against Communism—the Marshall Plan, NATO, and the containment policy—were built with the support of Republican moderates, against the opposition of most conservatives in the G.O.P. Isolationism and xenophobia had appeared after the 1938 midterms, and during the Battle of Britain the conservative coalition in Congress opposed Lend-Lease.) The Cold War enemy, within and without, was fixed and familiar; the new one, in this age of free-floating economic and social anxiety, has already assumed a number of guises: paroled convicts, illegal immigrants, "counterculture McGoverniks." And Mr. Gingrich promises endless investigations into putative Clinton scandals. Though the spectacle is likely to be pale compared with the ferreting out of un-American activities by Nixon and McCarthy, it will nonetheless be part of the restoration, providing a link with tradition.

In his Heritage Foundation speech, Mr. Gingrich explained that his actions follow a hierarchy: his tactics serve his projects, which flow from his strategies, which, in turn, come from his "vision." Vanquishing "secular politics" requires many projects; precipitating a battle over whether the American republic emanates from God is one of them, fulfilling what appears to be a strategy of excommunicating political opponents as foes of the sacred. "We need the debate over secularism versus the right of a spiritual life," he said, as if the one were somehow incompatible with the other. "Left-wing élitists" have no appreciation for the word "Creator," so "it is virtually impossible for them to engage in this discussion." The lines are drawn: pro-God or anti-God. In the Newtonian universe, the tactics below turn the gears between to move the heavens above.

—SIDNEY BLUMENTHAL

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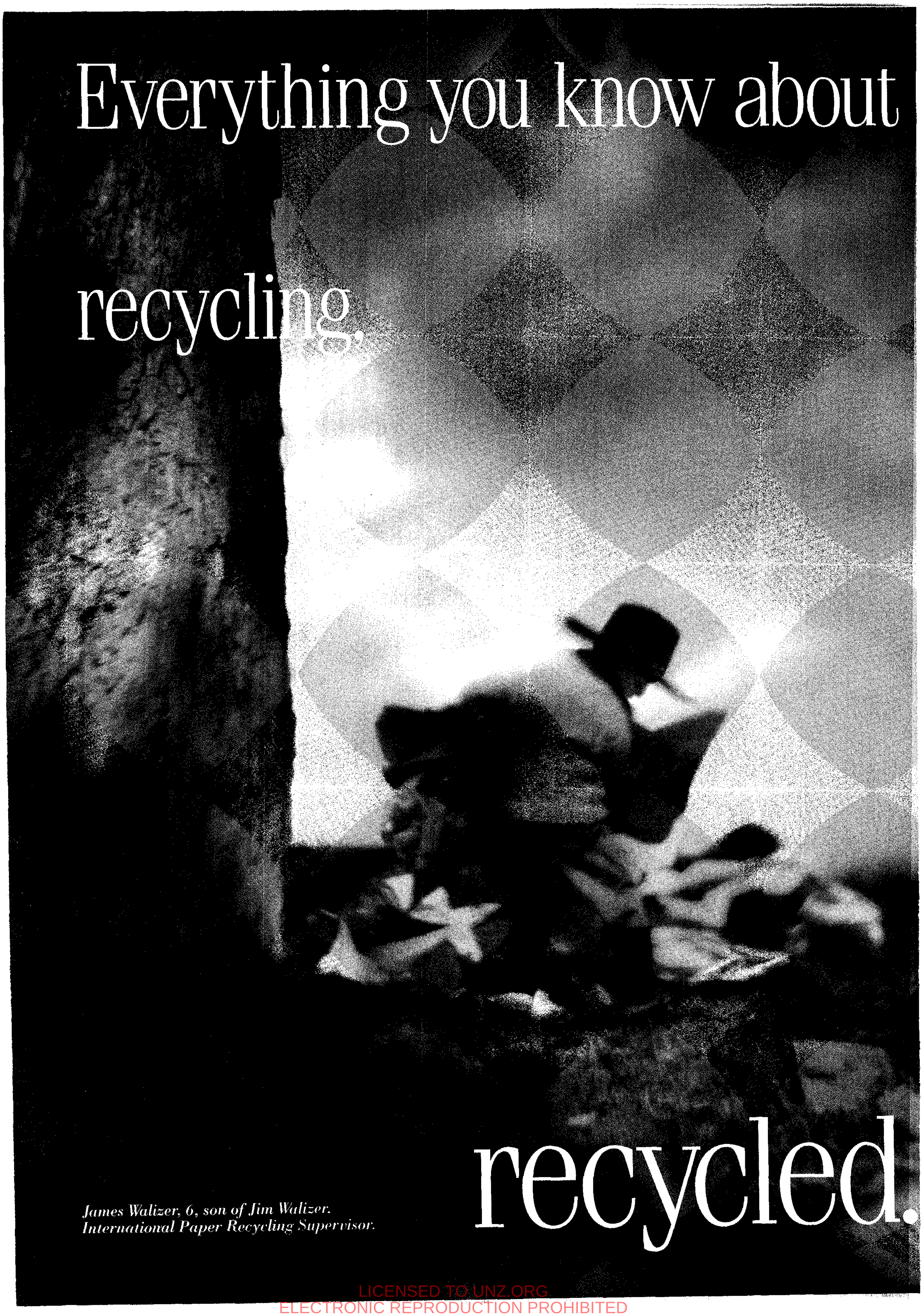
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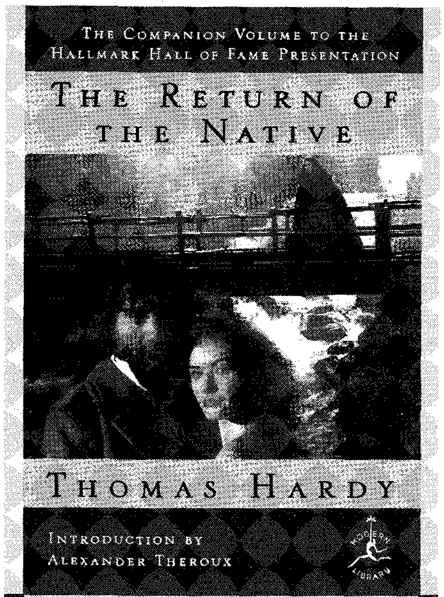

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HAITIAN INTERVENTION

Hendrik Hertzberg's Comment ("Haiti So Far," October 17th) is certainly right to argue that in the wake of the United States' semi-permissive entry things are looking brighter for democracy and human rights in Haiti. But on the issue of amnesty Hertzberg conflates two entirely distinct concepts. Last year's Governors Island Agreement did call for an amnesty, but not an amnesty anything like the one proposed by the Carter-Jonassaint agreement. Political acts—not common crimes, like murdering civilians—are all that Governors Island covered, in accordance with strict limitations imposed by the Haitian Constitution. The gap between Governors Island and the "general amnesty" referred to by Carter-Jonassaint is huge. One ironic benefit of the United States presence in Haiti is that the Haitian National Assembly, finally able to deliberate in relative calm, has apparently chosen to ignore Carter-Jonassaint and has passed a law designed to narrow any future amnesties. It is to be hoped that Haiti's people, free from fear, will carefully consider how to proceed from here. Meanwhile, it is the members of the National Assembly who should be praised for taking the baton from the Americans and setting off on their own path.

ROBERT O. WEINER
Coördinator, Americas Program
Lawyers Committee for Human Rights
New York City

There is no doubt that the majority of Haitians feel that a great burden has been lifted from them, but we, as United States citizens, cannot forget that our government bears some responsibility for the very situation in Haiti that the United States military forces were sent there to reverse. Our joy that Cédras's dictatorship has ended and the democratically elected President has been restored to his rightful place should be tempered by the knowledge that, through the efforts of the C.I.A. and the training provided by the Department of Defense to Haitian military personnel, the United States spent years (and a fortune) sustaining injustice in Haiti.

MICHAEL W. HOVEY
Syracuse, N.Y.

Mr. Hertzberg's plaudits for Clinton's tactical handling of Haiti are all well and good, but he avoids an important strategic question: Why are United States' resources and, inevitably, human lives being spent in Haiti at all? Clinton put forward the notion of "restoring democracy." Is the United States planning to reinstate nascent democracies willy-nilly throughout the world? Or does Clinton suggest that a renegade Haiti represents a security threat to the United States? If not, then, however noble the President's motives may seem, he's still practicing old-fashioned gunboat diplomacy.

NICHOLAS SCHROEDER
Redondo Beach, Calif.

WHEN DEFENSE IS OFFENSIVE

Alan M. Dershowitz, in his letter in the issue of October 17th, mistakes historicity for validity. Henry Brougham's 1820 pronouncement on a lawyer's obligation to his client is not validated merely by having been written a hundred and seventy-four years ago. If the passage of time sanctifies legal opinions, then we should think seriously about adopting the strictures of Draco, who, around 621 B.C., codified Athenian law and prescribed death as the penalty for every infraction, even spit-

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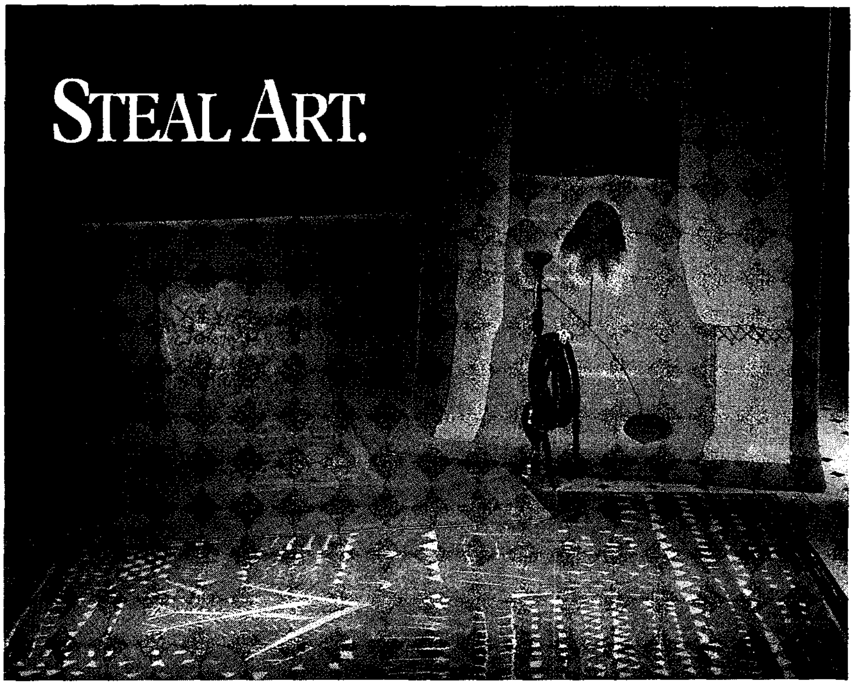

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ting in the street. Of course, Professor Dershowitz is diametrically opposed to such heavy-handedness, and rightly so. But he would see any felon go unpunished just as long as the defense counsel is capable of defeating the prosecution.

JERRY H. SIMPSON, JR.
Charlotte, N.C.

Professor Myron Moskovitz offers a reasonable defense of the American system of justice (In the Mail, October 17th), but his dismissal of the "inquisitorial" European system is too glib. Under the present American system of justice, convictions of the innocent are rare. However, such false convictions are vastly outnumbered by acquittals of those who actually committed the crimes with which they were charged, as a result of "aggressive" defense tactics or innumerable legal technicalities. Which currently inflicts the greater suffering on the American public—convictions of the innocent or acquittals of the guilty? For those of us who believe that all instances of injustice are equal, the inquisitorial system may have much to recommend it.

H. NORMAN WHITELEY
Seattle, Wash.

HARDBALL

It is always a treat to read Roger Angell (The Sporting Scene, October 17th), but he and other commentators miss the central point of the baseball strike. Big-time sports is primarily a marketing tool. From the lowliest rookie to the most gloriously overpaid superstar, the name of the game is selling sponsorship for all kinds of merchandise. The principal motivators within the marketing game are greed and questionable taste, and the baseball owners and baseball players are amply endowed with both. It will take a team of Madison Avenue specialists to resolve their differences.

W. L. MORRIS
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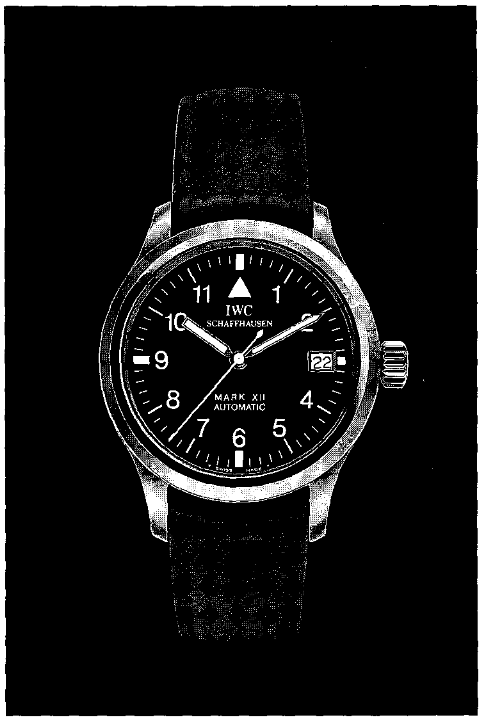

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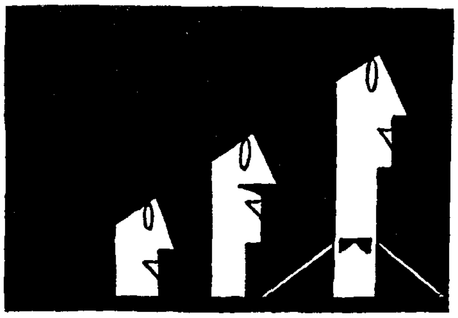
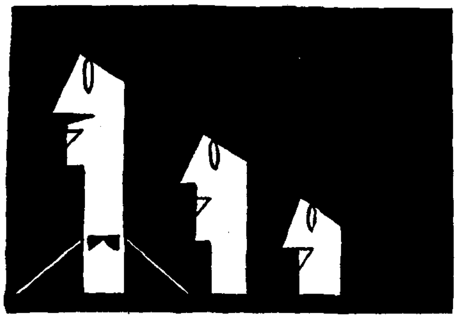


GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
20	21	22	16	17	18	19



THE THEATRE

Gale Forces

OWING to land-office demand, the Manhattan Theatre Club has extended "Love! Valour! Compassion!" through mid-January; after that the play will move to one of the large Off Broadway theatres of which the city has so precious few, or maybe even to Broadway. Everyone shut out of the M.T.C. run seems to have the same question, though: Will Nathan Lane move with it? Even if the answer is no—the actor will be preparing to film the Mike Nichols–Elaine May remake of "La Cage aux Folles"—that shouldn't discourage theatregoers. Certainly, Lane delivers his zingers in a uniquely endearing manner, and the way he cavorts in a floral-apron-and-hat getup is plotz-assuring. But such is the polish of Terrence McNally's writing and the strength of the ensemble that Lane's part doesn't, finally, depend on a specific actor.

At Primary Stages, there's another force-of-nature performance on display, in Charles Busch's Greenwich Village comedy "You Should Be So Lucky." The tornado is Julie Halston (whose comic skills are even more lavishly showcased in her night-club act, which she'll have to fly downtown to reprise at Eighty Eight's starting November 26). As a Scarsdale vulgarian named Lenore, Halston also has zingers to deliver and getups to parade, and she does both as hilariously as Lane. But the other actors are still standing after Lane gusts through the McNally. Every time Halston exits the Busch, the performance is gone with the wind.

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.)

THE FLYING KARAMAZOV BROTHERS DO THE IMPOSSIBLE!—Just in from London's Criterion Theatre, the Brothers have a new show that will open Nov. 20 at 6. Previews will run through Nov. 19. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 307-4100.)

HAPGOOD—Stockard Channing heads up a British intelligence agency in the New York première of this 1988 play by Tom Stoppard. In previews. (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

THE SHADOW BOX—A revival of Michael Cristofer's 1977 play, with Mary Alice, Estelle Parsons, Mercedes Ruehl, and Marlo Thomas. Previews through Nov. 19. Opens Nov. 20 at 6. (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200.)

SUNSET BOULEVARD—Glenn Close stars as Norma Desmond in Andrew Lloyd Webber's new musical. Based on the 1950 movie and directed by Trevor Nunn. Two previews on Nov. 16. Opens Nov. 17 at 6:45. (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 307-4007.)

3 POSTCARDS—Craig Lucas and Craig Carnelia's musical about three Manhattan friends, presented by Circle Rep. Opens Nov. 16 at 8. (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 239-6200.)

VITA & VIRGINIA—Vanessa Redgrave and Eileen Atkins star in a play that Ms. Atkins adapted from the letters of Vita Sackville-West and Virginia Woolf. Zoe Caldwell is the director. Previews through Nov. 20. Opens Nov. 21 at 6:45. (Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 307-4100.)

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE?—A comedy by Donald Margulies about an odd Brooklyn family, with Faith Prince, Alan Rosenberg, Jerry Stiller, and Florence Stanley. In previews. (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 307-4100.)

OPENED RECENTLY

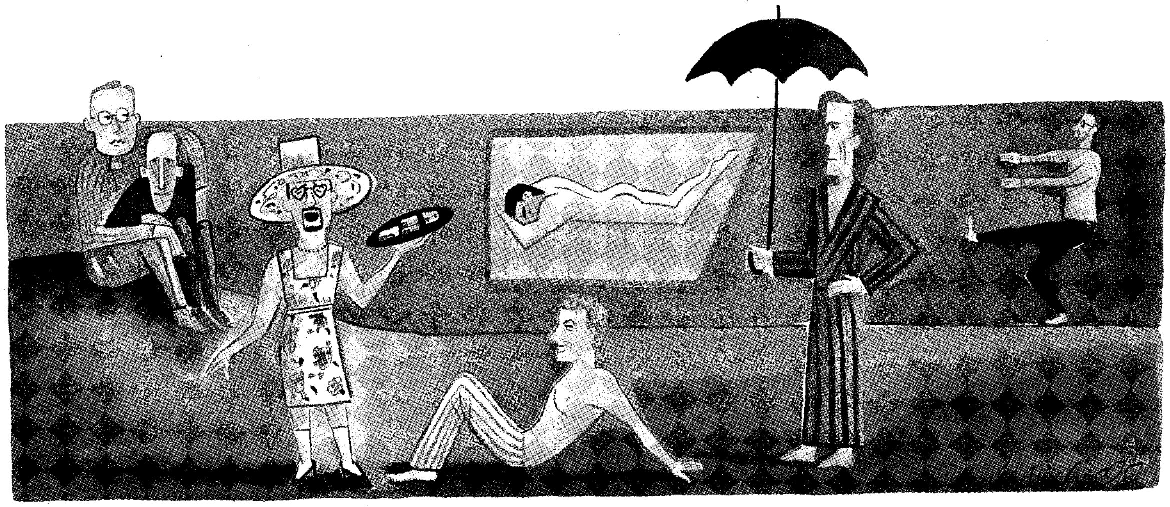
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST—Disney's Broadway money-spinner, adapted from the animated-film version, has a few moments of solid-gold theatrical amazement: the showstopping "Be Our Guest" production number and the Beast's transformation into the Prince. (Reviewed in our issue of 5/2/94.) (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 307-4100.)

THE BEAUX' STRATAGEM—A Restoration comedy by George Farquhar, presented by the Pearl Theatre Company. (Theatre 80, at 80 St. Marks Pl. 598-9802.)

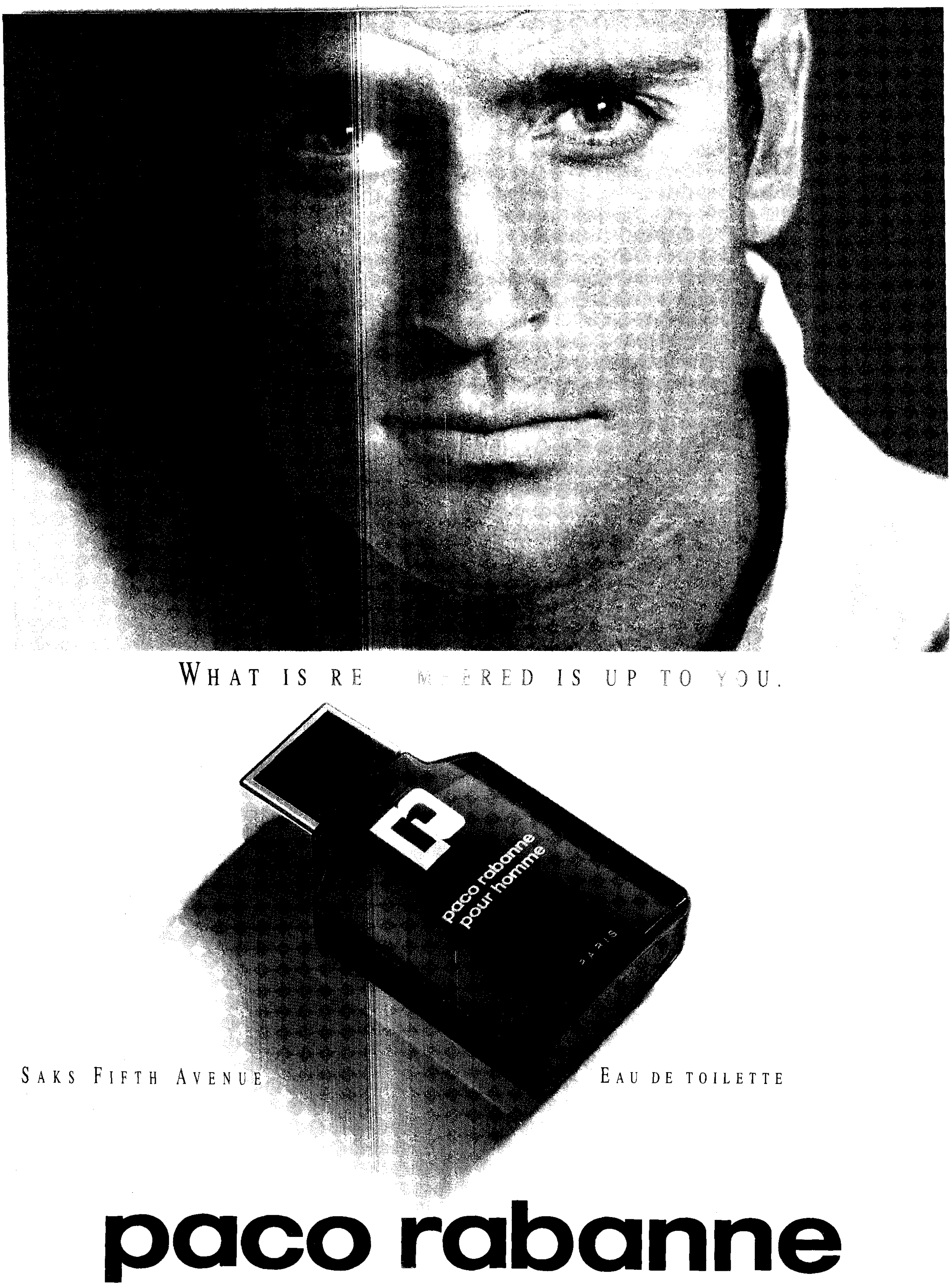
BLADE TO THE HEAT—Set in the black and Latino world of New York in the late fifties, Oliver Mayer's play uses boxing as a means to examine the sexuality of a group of men—prizefighting as a homoerotic battleground. George C. Wolfe, in a brilliant display of directorial panache, turns a piece of mediocre writing into sensationally stylized theatre. (11/14/94) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Closes Nov. 27.)

CAROUSEL—Nicholas Hytner's authoritative direction combines with Bob Crowley's inspired sets to transplant the National Theatre's 1993 smash hit onto the Vivian Beaumont stage. Bold, beautiful, and controversial, this multicultural reinterpretation launches Rodgers and Hammerstein toward the twenty-first century. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

A CHEEVER EVENING—A. R. Gurney's new play, based on eighteen stories by John Cheever, is Cheeveresque in name only, a skin-deep, almost sitcom-like gloss on the writer's piercingly beautiful and intensely disquieting work. The only authentic thing about the evening is the talent of the six delicious actors in the cast—John Cunningham, Mary Beth Peil, Jack Gilpin, Julie Hagerty, Robert Stanton, and Jennifer Van Dyck. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)



The cast of Terrence McNally's "Love! Valour! Compassion!"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pour homme
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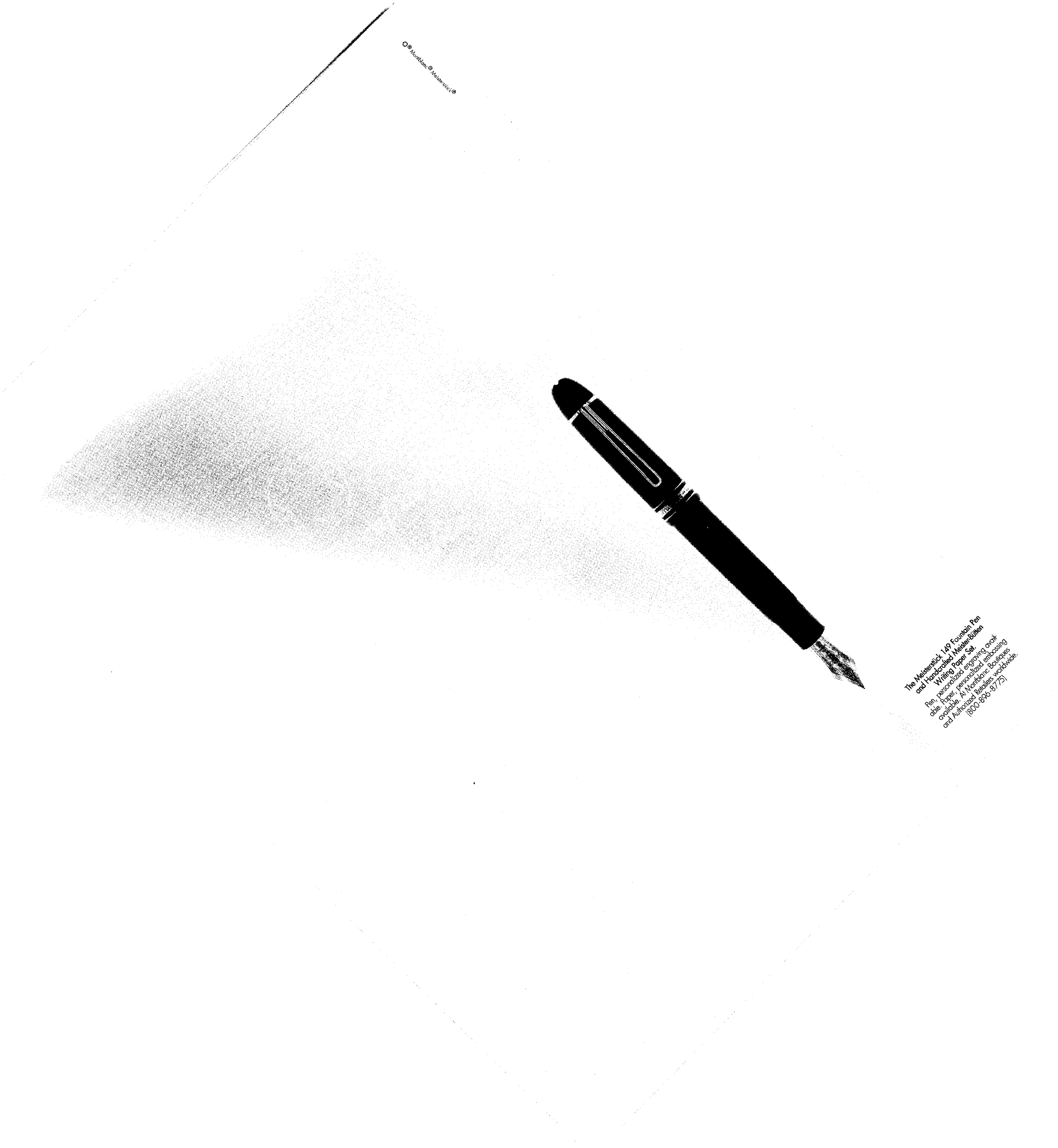
Eau de toilette
paco rabanne
PARIS



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THE THEATRE-Cont'd

The Cover of Life—While R. T. Robinson's new play has comic moments, it's serious at heart. Sara Botsford plays a savvy New York reporter sent south to research a cover story for *Life* about three Louisiana women gallantly making sacrifices while the three brothers they're married to are off fighting the Second World War. Peter Masterson directed; the acting is clear, the staging effective, and the drama poignant. (American Place Theatre, 111 W. 46th St. 239-6200.)

Damn Yankees—The big musical hit of 1955 is back, in its first Broadway revival. George Abbott and Douglass Wallop's book has been jarringly updated by the director, Jack O'Brien (with the help of Mr. Abbott). But the cast delivers Richard Adler and Jerry Ross's music with sporty energy. (4/4/94) (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.)

Das Barbecü—A musical comedy, inspired by Wagner's "Ring" cycle and set in Texas. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave. 307-4100.)

The Diva Is Dismissed—Jenifer Lewis has a good voice, good looks, and good comic timing in her one-woman show. Billed as "the queen of camp," she isn't quite as outrageous as the title suggests. Less humility would deliver more glee. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

Choreographer Pina Bausch's "Two Cigarettes in the Dark," at BAM.

Durang Durang—Short plays written by Christopher Durang, including "For Whom the Southern Belle Tolls," a spoof of "The Glass Menagerie." (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

A Fair Country—A new play by Jon Robin Baitz. (The Space, 114 W. 17th St. 727-0020. Closes Nov. 19.)

The Gift Horse—In the Jewish Repertory Theatre's production of a new comedy by Michael Hardstark, the Orthodox father-in-law of an inveterate gambler figures out how to use Hebrew numerology to pick winners at the track. It's a nostalgia piece (the play is set in the late fifties), but the actors break through the limits of the writing. With Brian Rose, Bernie Passeltiner, and, in a wonderful turn, Sue Brady as a manicurist. (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000. Closes Nov. 27.)

The Glass Menagerie—Julie Harris stars as Amanda Wingfield in a new production of the Tennessee Williams classic. (Roundabout, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400.)

Grease!—The talented cast and the inventive production team show off the gleeful phoniness of Jim Jacobs and Warren Casey's musical with unembarrassed affection, and the result is a fun fake that's not trying to pass as the real thing. (5/30/94) (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 239-6200.)

Hey Buddy—A play by Bryan Goluboff. (American Jewish Theatre, 307 W. 26th St. 633-9797. Closes Dec. 4.)

Inside Out—A six-woman musical extolling the benefits of group therapy, and it's actually fun. The actors do more with their roles than you'd expect, and their voices are strong. Henry Fonte's direction is sometimes heavy-handed, but Gary Slavin's choreography enriches every song. Book, music, and lyrics by Doug Haverty and Adryan Russ. (Cherry Lane Theatre, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020.)

An Inspector Calls—J. B. Priestley's 1945 mystery is not really a play—it's a speech, about every man's link to every other man. The fine cast, which includes Kenneth Cranham, Philip Bosco, and Jane Adams, has ideas, not actions, to play. Directed by Stephen Daldry. (5/16/94) (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Irish Repertory Theatre—Presenting two shows in repertory: "Mother of All the Behans," with Rosaleen Linehan, and "Alive, Alive Oh!," with Milo O'Shea and Kitty Sullivan. (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 239-6200.)

Jackie Mason: Politically Incorrect—The comedian's new show. (4/25/94) (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Love! Valour! Compassion!—The eight gay men in Terrence McNally's beautifully written new drama connect in ways that almost any nuclear family would envy. The play, set in and around a country house on the three holiday weekends that punctuate the summer, is imbued with a feeling of timelessness that nevertheless doesn't let us forget that we won't be here forever. Under the fine direction of Joe Mantello, seven actors (Stephen Spinella, Stephen Bogardus, John Benjamin Hickey, Randy Becker, Justin Kirk, John Glover—doing double duty as identical twins—and the wonderful Nathan Lane) present humbling evidence of what love is and can be. (11/14/94) (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

A Midsummer Night's Dream—Put the Ridiculous Theatrical Company and Shakespeare's comedy together and you get ridiculousness of a very high order indeed. (Charles Ludlam Theatre, 1 Sheridan Sq. 691-2271.)

Night Seasons—Jean Stapleton is the matriarch of a wealthy Texas family in this play by Horton Foote. (Kampo Cultural Center, 31 Bond St. 279-4200. Closes Dec. 4.)

Nunsense 2: The Sequel—The second coming of writer-director Dan Goggin's hit. Five talented actresses take the veil and perform a revue to raise money for their convent. There's dancing, singing, boozing, and bingo, but none of it saves the show from the clutches of cliché. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321.)

Passion—Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine's listless musical, in which the main characters spend much of their time singing love letters to and from each other. (5/23/94) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Public Enemy—Kenneth Branagh's play is not much more than a moody knockabout, but it does offer an enticing conceit: a Belfast boy (Paul Ronan) works the night-club circuit as a Jimmy Cagney impersonator until the Troubles turn his gangster fantasies into real-life drama. (Irish Arts Center, 553 W. 51st St. 757-3318.)

Show Boat—Harold Prince's bighearted production of the 1927 Jerome Kern–Oscar Hammerstein II musical is epic-size, full of life and full of vision. With John McMartin and Elaine Stritch as the patriarch and the matriarch of the floating theatre, and Lonette McKee, whose moving rendition of "Bill" is the show's most intimate moment. Also with Michel Bell, Rebecca Luker, Mark Jacoby, Gretha Boston, Dorothy Stanley, and Joel Blum. (10/17/94) (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 307-4100.)

Simpatico—A new play by Sam Shepard, with Beverly D'Angelo, Marcia Gay Harden, Ed Harris, James Gammon, and Welker White. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

Some People—Danny Hoch's one-man show features thirteen New York characters. Jo Bonney directed. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

Three Tall Women—A moving, poetic play by Edward Albee, which is dominated by the huge, heroic performance of Myra Carter. Jordan Baker and the droll and delightful Marian Seldes are also in the cast. (5/16/94) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 239-6200.)

Uncommon Women and Others—In Wendy Wasserstein's 1977 paean to Seven Sisterhood, five Mount Holyoke alumnae get together a few years after graduation and compare notes on the ways in which they and the world have and have not lived up to their expectations. Since Carole Rothman's production goes for maximum laughs and minimum emotional impact, the play seems stuck in its own shtick. With Jessica Lundy, Mary McCann, and Haviland Morris. (11/14/94) (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 239-6200.)

Yellow Fever—Pan Asian Rep's revival of R. A. Shiomi's 1983 hit: a spoof of Sam Spade that tries to be more—unfortunately. The cast includes Ernest Abuba and Eleonora Kihlberg. (St. Clement's, 423 W. 46th St. 245-2660. Closes Nov. 19.)

You Should Be So Lucky—Charles Busch's comedy, with Nell Campbell, Julie Halston, Stephen Pearlman, and Mr. Busch himself. (Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. 333-7471. Closes Nov. 27.)

LONG RUNS

ALL IN THE TIMING: John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 239-6200. . . . **ANGELS IN AMERICA:** "Millennium Approaches" and "Perestroika." (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200.) . . . **BLOOD BROTHERS:** Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **CATS:** Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. . . . **CRAZY FOR YOU:** Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. . . . **GUYS AND DOLLS:** Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **KISS OF THE SPIDER WOMAN:** Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **MISS SAIGON:** Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **STOMP:** Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477. . . . **THE WHO'S TOMMY:** St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200.

DANCE

Maximalism

Pina Bausch, Tanztheater Wuppertal's high priestess of angst and anomie, is back at her New York home away from home, the Brooklyn Academy of Music—this time with the American première of a 1985 *Tanzabend* called "Two Cigarettes in the Dark." Over the past decade, Bausch's troupe has performed a dozen Expressionist works at BAM's Next Wave Festival, filling the Opera House stage with leaves, dirt, carnations, dust clouds, collapsing walls, evening-gowned women on monkey rings, men in underwear, and a lot of chairs. Bausch may be more responsible than any other choreographer for the "What next?" weariness currently prevalent among New York dancegoers.

The three-hour series of fragments and vignettes—mostly solos and small ensembles—that add up to "Two Cigarettes in the Dark" started in rehearsal with a set of questions and commands. ("How does nothing look?" "Use the word 'mother.' ") This time around, the music runs the gamut from Monteverdi to Alberta Hunter, and the stage offers views of a giant aquarium, sand hills, and a stand of full-sized trees. While what goes on there will be open to interpretation, you can be certain that it will be vivid, visually arresting, and about as far from minimalism as performance gets.

New York City Ballet—The opening performance of the season. Nov. 22 at 7:30: "Glazounov Pas de Deux" (New York première); an excerpt from "Ecstatic Orange"; a new untitled ballet; and "Symphony in C." A benefit program; for tickets, call 870-5585. (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Through Feb. 26.)

Garth Fagan Dance—Nov. 16 and Nov. 19 at 8 and Nov. 20 at 2: "Prelude," "Draft of Shadows," "Postcards: Pressures & Possibilities," and excerpts from "Griot New York." . . . ¶ Nov. 17 at 8: "Telling a Story," "Postcards: Pressures & Possibilities," and "Traipsing Through the May." . . . ¶ Nov. 18 and Nov. 22 at 8, and Nov. 20 at 7:30: Excerpts from "Griot New York," "Never Top 40 (Jukebox)," "Postcards: Pressures & Possibilities," and "Moth Dreams." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Through Nov. 27.)

Pina Bausch—With her Tanztheater Wuppertal, in the opening performances of an engagement presenting the American première of "Two Cigarettes in the Dark." (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100. Nov. 17 at 7, and Nov. 18-19 and Nov. 22 at 8. Through Nov. 30.)

Tim Hadel—The choreographer offers the première of "Momentary Lapses." (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Nov. 17-19 at 8 and Nov. 20 at 3.)

Tribeca Performing Arts Center—Nov. 17 and Nov. 19 at 8: Contemporary Dance Theatre of El Salvador, in its United States début. . . . ¶ Nov. 18 at 8: Mark DeGarmo and Dancers, in "La Noche de las Noches," with live music by the Brentano String Quartet. (199 Chambers St. 346-8500.)

Danspace Project—Nov. 18 at 8:30: In association with the Pick Up Performance Co., an evening of works in progress choreographed by David Gordon. (No tickets necessary, but reservations are suggested.) . . . ¶ Nov. 19 at 8:30: A benefit program, featuring works by Douglas Dunn & Dancers, Ishmael Houston-Jones and Yvonne Meier, Sarah Skaggs, and Nami Yamamoto. (St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 674-8194.)

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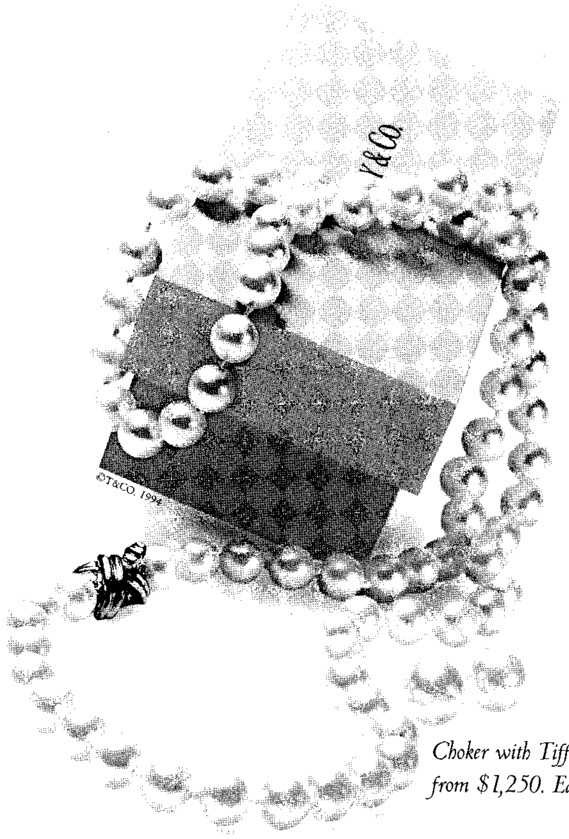

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NIGHT LIFE

Leading Man

BRYAN FERRY'S professional persona is that of a man who sleeps in a crisp linen suit, with a Martini on his night table. But when we interviewed the forty-nine-year-old British singer in his suite at the Parker Meridien, he was wearing a flannel shirt; and while his innate elegance was unmistakable, he also projected an appealing earthiness. "I think I'm perceived as someone who's always at social gatherings with rich people," Ferry acknowledged with a smile. "Well, that's not how I live. I might be seen once every two years at some bash. If somebody very kindly invites me to some grand dinner or opening, I'll say, 'Why not, I might know some friends who are going.' But I'm really just a hardworking artist."

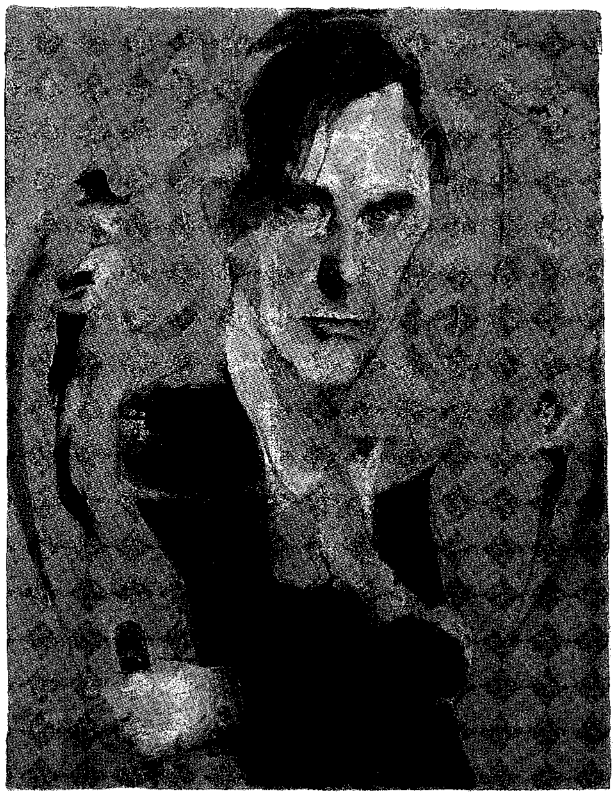
Of course, in Ferry's case the term "artist" denotes something more than your basic rock-and-roll idol. An aspiring painter in his youth, he established himself musically as front man for the seventies art-rock outfit Roxy Music, a band whose album covers had a lot to do with forming his image as a superromantic club crawler. His solo career—which began during his tenure with Roxy and picked up momentum after the group dissolved in 1983—has been similarly distinguished by a combination of intricate, multilayered grooves, elaborately atmospheric arrangements, and impeccable visual flair. Along the way, Ferry developed a reputation for epic procrastination (or perfectionism, as the case may be). "Mamouna," his latest album, is his first collection of new material since 1988. For the video of the gorgeous title track, he devised an Arabian fantasy and had it shot in Marrakech, but MTV balked at the inclusion of a heroine in chains and a bare-breasted mermaid, so it's being reëdited for television. Meanwhile, you can check out Ferry's new songs live and uncensored at the Beacon Theater on November 21-23.

CONCERTS

SANTANA—Back in '69, Carlos Santana fronted the Santana Blues Band, and in the early seventies the guitarist's assimilationist blend of bluesy solos backed by salsa rhythms gave a world beat to post-Hendrix rock. Santana's studio albums have been power-chord retreads—somebody get this man the right producer!—but the recently released CD "Brothers," an instrumental collaboration with brother Jorge and nephew Carlos Hernandez, suggests that the fire is still there. With Mountain. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. Nov. 17 at 8.)

LOREENA MCKENNITT—McKennitt specializes in sombre Celtic folk music with a mystical Middle Eastern varnish. Bouzoukis are delicately plucked, tablas chatter, and McKennitt's beautiful voice quivers like a Druid high priestess's. The material from "The Mask and Mirror," her haunting new CD, should sound particularly grand in this stately old room. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Nov. 17 at 8.)

MARTY EHRLICH'S DARK WOODS ENSEMBLE—This combo gives chamber jazz a good name, thanks to Ehrlich's reeds, accompanied by French horn, bass, and cello. "Emergency Peace," the Ensemble's 1991 release, was a low-key triumph. (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Nov. 21 at 8.)



Bryan Ferry at the Beacon Theatre.

N ASCENCIOS

BASIA—Neil Simon Theatre, 250 W. 52nd St. 307-4100. Nov. 16, Nov. 18-20, and Nov. 22, all at 8. Through Nov. 27.

RASHIED ALI QUINTET—Alternative Museum, 594 Broadway. 966-4444. Nov. 16 at 8.

"FLAMENCO GITANO!"—Two concerts of flamenco music and dance by Miguel Funi, Concha Vargas, Pepa Vargas, and others. (New School, 66 W. 12th St. Nov. 18 at 8. For information about tickets, call 545-7536. . . . ¶ Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Nov. 19 at 8.)

DAN CONVERSE, LEON MALESON, AND CRAIG RIVERS—Henry Street Settlement, 466 Grand St. 598-0400. Nov. 19 at 2.

LUCECITA BENÍTEZ—Appearing with her orchestra. (Hostos Center for the Arts & Culture, Hostos Community College, 450 Grand Concourse, the Bronx. 1-718 518-4455. Nov. 19 at 7:30.)

CYRUS CHESTNUT TRIO—St. Ann's Church, 157 Montague St., Brooklyn. 1-718 858-2424. Nov. 19 at 8.

MOJDEH ENSEMBLE—In a concert of sacred Persian music. (Alice Tully Hall. 875-5050. Nov. 19 at 8.)

MEL MARTIN—With Kenny Barron, David Williams, and Victor Lewis. (Greenwich House, 27 Barrow St. Nov. 20 at 3. Tickets at the door on the afternoon of the concert.)

"HEAVENLY JAZZ"—The series presents Milt Hinton, Frank Wess, Barry Harris, and Jackie Williams. (Church of the Heavenly Rest, Fifth Ave. at 90th St. Nov. 20 at 5. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

BRYAN FERRY—With Combustible Edison. (Beacon Theatre. Nov. 21-23 at 8.)

CLUBS

ACADEMY, 234 W. 43rd St.—Nov. 18-19: A top-shelf triple-header, with **LIVE**, the **FATIMA MANSIONS**, and **WEEZER**. Though still in their early twenties, the members of Live perform with the authority of artists twice their age. Front man Ed Kowalczyk's keening baritone and brooding persona have been compared to Pearl Jam vocalist Eddie Vedder's, but his compelling delivery, by turns manic and deeply poignant, is all his own. Opening for Live is Fatima Mansions, a bracing and soulful Irish rock band (their motto is "keep music evil") that deserves wider exposure, and Weezer, a rather snide but prodigious young combo who suggest the Beastie Boys as a power trio. For concert information, call 249-8870.

BLARNEY STAR, 43 Murray St. (732-2873)—Nov. 18: From Boston, by way of Ireland, the **JIMMY NOONAN** quartet, featuring **JOHN MURPHY** on fiddle, **NOEL SCOTT** *on button accordion, and* **VINCENT COSTELLO** on vocals and guitar.

BOTTOM LINE, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—The three-woman operation called **BETTY** settles in on Nov. 19. Betty's act, a sort of cabaret gone haywire, contains elements of funk music, performance art, satire, and *standup comedy, and it all moves* along at an amphetamine pace. Nov. 20-21: Televison star cum night-club diva **KATEY SEGAL** performs.

BROWNIES, 169 Avenue A, at 10th St. (429-8392)—The **CUCUMBERS**, who stop by on Nov. 17, make delicately sweet pop, and the majority of their songs eschew *ugly guitar noise in favor of twangy* country-flavored elements, like banjo, mandolin, and forlorn vocals. If you're looking for ugly guitar noise, catch **SKELETON KEY**, on Nov. 18: this nasty new downtown trio plays what might be best described as Tom Waits meets Nirvana.

CAFÉ SIN-É, 122 St. Marks Pl. (982-0370)—Singer-songwriter **SARAH NAGOURNEY** performs on Nov. 17.

CHICAGO B.L.U.E.S., 73 Eighth Ave., at 13th St. (924-9755)—Dedicated to the music of the Windy City. Nov. 16-19 belongs to **WILLIE KENT AND THE GENTS.**

CLEOPATRA SUPPER CLUB, 327 W. 44th St (262-1111)—Live music, belly dancing, and an honest-to-God whirling dervish, every Wednesday through Sunday.

THE COOLER, 416 W. 14th St. (229-0785)—Nov. 18: **CHAVEZ** headlines a bill of alternative rock. Every Monday in November, members of the **SCREAMING HEADLESS TORSOS** curate a free evening of noise and art. Wednesday nights are given over to experimental d.j. spinoffs.

FLANNERY'S, 205 W. 14th St. (929-9589)—A well-scrubbed, amiable Irish pub with many of the classic features (pints of Guinness, non-stop TV sports) and a few of the near-classics (a CD jukebox, a portrait of Elvis).

IRVING PLAZA, 17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (777-6800)—**D GENERATION** stops by on Nov. 16. The **CONNELLS**, here on Nov. 19, play the kind of edgy, melodic, and lyrically oblique songs that get a band labelled "the next R.E.M." They've just released a new EP, "New Boy," which features live tracks, new material, and a Jethro Tull cover. . . ¶ The Swing Dance Society gathers here every Sunday night, at the Continental Club. The dancers all share a passion for the Lindy Hop, a dance that involves a lot of whirling and the occasional display of underwear. Sets from eight until midnight. For information on the society, call 696-9737.

KAPTAIN BANANA, 101 Greene St. (343-9000)—French cabaret *en travesti* in SoHo. Ten dancers re-create the Court of Versailles, a carnival in Rio, Marlene Dietrich, and the

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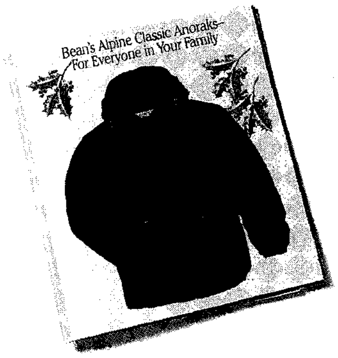
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NIGHT LIFE–Cont'd

Andrews Sisters. There's also a singing gorilla. Dining.

LIMELIGHT, Sixth Ave. at 20th St. (807-7850)—A church turned eighties hot spot, this unholy venue currently plays host to a variety of techno and alternative acts. Nov. 20: **PRONG.** Wednesday night is Disco 2000.

MAXWELL'S, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken. (1-201 798-4064)—Nov. 17: Catch the English sensation known as **ECHOBELLY.** Nov. 18: **VELOCITY GIRL.** With Walt Mink.

MERCURY LOUNGE, 217 E. Houston St. (260-4700)—Nov. 16: **KEN BUTLER.** Nov. 18 belongs to **DADA,** a guitar-driven trio that mixes sincere and straightforward power-pop with wildly funny, cynical ditties that evoke the spirit of Zappa and the Cramps without veering too far from the mainstream.

NELL'S, 246 W. 14th St. (675-1567)—A Victorian-style club, home to an eclectic crowd of downtown youngsters dancing to throbbing funk and techno-pop.

NEW MUSIC CAFÉ, 380 Canal St. (941-0900)—Nov. 16: **BOB'S DINER,** featuring guitarist **MARK LAMBERT.**

PADDY REILLY'S MUSIC BAR, 519 Second Ave., at 29th St. (686-1210)—**BLACK 47** usually plays on Wednesdays and Saturdays, and Speir Mor (Gaelic for Big Sky) performs for a hearty following on Fridays. Séisiún—a traditional Irish jam—is on Thursday nights.

LES POULETS, 16 W. 22nd St. (229-2000)—The name may be French, but the music here is Latin: expect salsa, merengue, and the occasional cha-cha. **FRANKIE RUIZ** performs on Nov. 18, followed by **ANTHONY CRUZ,** on Nov. 19. Dining.

RODEO BAR, 375 Third Ave., at 27th St. (683-6500)—The walls simulate a log cabin, a buffalo head blows smoke through its nostrils, there's a horse trailer that's been converted into a bar, and you get peanuts for eating and, occasionally, throwing. On Nov. 16: **FIVE CHINESE BROTHERS**—a smart pop act along the lines of Squeeze or Crowded House, but louder, looser, and bluesier—salutes the music of Neil Young.

ROSELAND, 239 W. 52nd St. (247-0200)—**CANDLEBOX** makes hair-straightening guitar music on Nov. 21-22.

SUPPER CLUB, 240 W. 47th St. (921-1940)—Brazilian singer-songwriter **MARISA MONTE,** who performs on Nov. 21, and again on Nov. 23, represents the best fusion of Latin passion and Western cool to appear in a long time. Monte's excellent new record, "Rose and Charcoal"—featuring such unlikely collaborators as Laurie Anderson and Philip Glass—was exquisitely produced by former Ambitious Lover Arto Lindsay. Her work sounds like a cross between Antonio Carlos Jobim and Rickie Lee Jones: overflowing with acoustic guitar, hand cymbals, lush bossa-nova grooves, and her effortless Portuguese melodies. Thursday nights belong to **GIANT STEP,** a roving collective of musicians, rappers, and d.j.s who mix jazz, funk, and hip-hop.

TRAMPS, 51 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—Nov. 17: **THE SUBDUDES,** a New Orleans-based R. & B.-and-rock ensemble that, in the manner of NRBQ, has had more success pleasing critics and other musicians than finding an audience. (They've worked with Shawn Colvin, and singer Tommy Malone performed on Rosanne Cash's latest release.) A sensational live band. Nov. 19: **LUNA.** The boys in Luna probably chose their name to salute their guiding light, Lou Reed. And like Lou, Luna makes stark, sleepy rock that features picaresque lyrics packed with deadpan comic irony. "California (All the Way)," the first track on their recently released CD "Bewitched," is a dreamy four-minute masterpiece.

WEBSTER HALL, 125 E. 11th St. (353-1600)—A byzantine disco wonderland with four floors, a coffee shop, and a wig boutique. Wednesday is drag night. Psychedelic Thursdays feature grunge acts and cheap beer.

WETLANDS, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—Nov. 19: **NEW POTATO CABOOSE,** followed by **SKY CRIES MARY,** on Nov. 20.

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

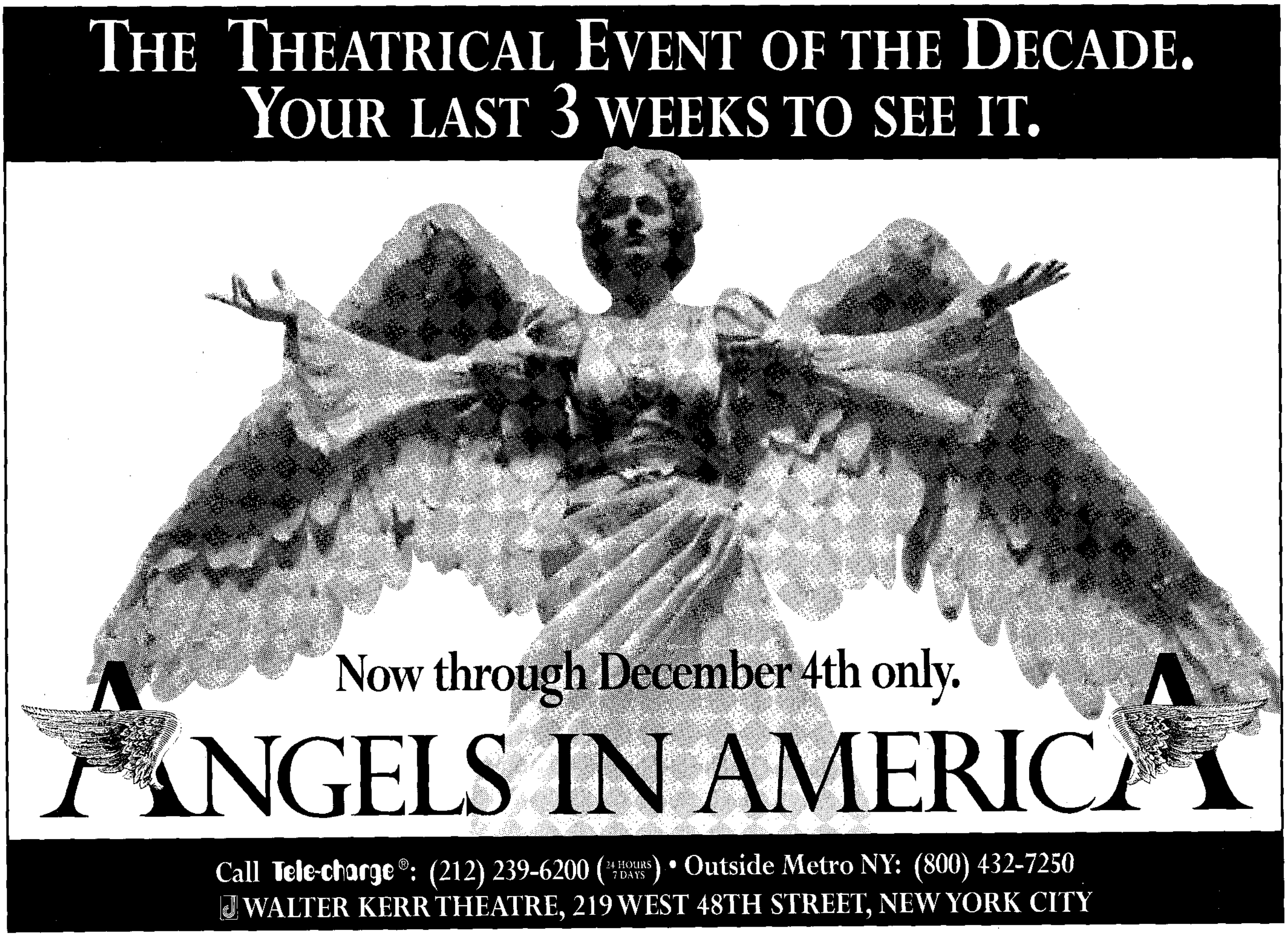
A.K.A., 77 W. Houston St., at Wooster St. (673-7325)—Nov. 18: The **JAZZHOLE.** The last time this excellent acid-jazz ensemble performed here, the huge band (which includes three vocalists, two rappers, and more than ten musicians) nearly fell off the stage. But the crowd was having too good a time to notice.

ALGONQUIN HOTEL, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—Vocalist **WESLIA WHITFIELD** is currently at work in the woody nook known as the Oak Room. Dining.

ARTHUR'S TAVERN, 57 Grove St. (675-6879)—Mondays belong to the Grove Street Stompers, Tuesdays through Thursdays to Al Bundy and Johnny Parker, weekends to the Freddy Francis trio, and Sundays to Lee Lorenz and the Creole Cookin' Jazz Band.

BLUE NOTE, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Latin-music legends **CELIA CRUZ** and **TITO PUENTE** and his orchestra are in through Nov. 20. Dining.

BRADLEY'S, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—On any given night, and well into the morning, one or another of New York's many formidable pianists can be found here. Through Nov. 19: **KENNY BARRON,** who may have succeeded too well as the pianist of choice—ubiquity and being taken for granted go hand in hand. Whatever the drawbacks of popularity and consistency, Barron turns every set into a lesson in unmannered, eloquent improvisation. He may be the most sympathetic accompanist around, but under the spotlight, he's a star. With bassist **PAUL WEST.** Dining.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Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle, a snug, windowless enclave in the doorman district, features discreet waiters, wraparound pastel murals, and singer-pianist **BOBBY SHORT.** Now in his twenty-seventh year at the café, Short can still spin an Ira Gershwin lyric with all the sophistication, humor, and pathos it deserves. Also well served are gems by Duke Ellington, Dorothy Fields, Irving Berlin, and, of course, Cole Porter. A de-lightful, de-lovely evening.... ¶ Across the hall, in Bemelmans Bar, **BARBARA CARROLL** presides at the piano. Carroll's timing is infallible, and she is equally at ease with legato figures and double-time sprints. Her vast repertoire has been known to include a funny "Sweet Georgia Brown" and a lilting, secret "Here's That Rainy Day."

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7900)—Through Nov. 20: **ALLAN HARRIS.** On Nov. 22: pianist **LYNN ARRIALE** leads a trio, featuring vocalist **KEVIN MAHOGANY.** On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL** leads a trio. Dining.

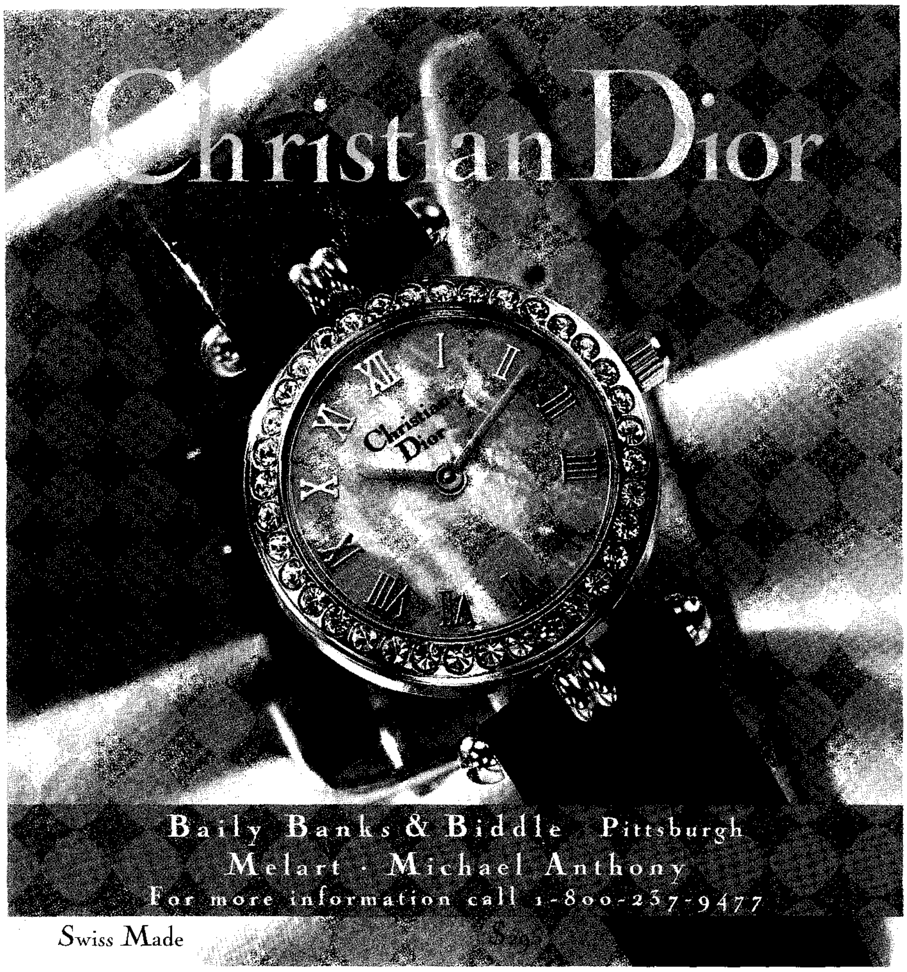
Fez, 380 Lafayette St. (533-7000)—A comfortable neo-Moroccan bar hidden inside the Time Café. The downstairs room, where bands perform, is a fine spot to take in a show. The **MINGUS BIG BAND** still packs them in every Thursday. Dining.

Fifty Seven Fifty Seven, 57 E. 57th St. (758-5757)—A cool, sumptuous piano-and-bass room in the Four Seasons Hotel. Thursdays through Sundays, **DONALD JOHNSTON** is the featured pianist. Dining.

Iridium, 44 W. 63rd St. (582-2121)—Through Nov. 19: the **WINARD HARPER** quintet. Harper is best known as the drumming sibling of the popular Harper Brothers band, and since their demise he's been pursuing his own hard-bop muse.

Knickerbocker, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—Nov. 16-19: The popular piano-and-bass duo **JOANNE BRACKEEN** and **CECIL MC BEE.** Tapping into the contemporary wellspring created by Tyner, Hancock, and Evans, Brackeen has fashioned an engaging personal sound at the piano. Everything she touches, from American songbook standards and Brazilian melodies to her own modernist pieces, is stamped with jazz authority. Like an old married couple, Brackeen and McBee—he's an intensely powerful bassist, who always plays with passion and intelligence—seem to read each other's minds and complete each other's musical sentences.

Knitting Factory, 47 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—Opening week at the new jazz palace. On Nov. 16: **HENRY THREADGILL** and his jazz carnival are back in town. The saxes bray, the trumpets bark, the tubas bellow, and one joyous mess of sound erupts. If new jazz can ever be labelled fun, this is the stuff. Nov. 18: **STEVE COLEMAN,** the man who brought the jazz world M-Base (a subversive collective dedicated to thumbing its nose at the neo-con movement of the eighties), continues to stir up his R. & B/hip-hop/bebop brew. If it doesn't always hold together, concentrate on Coleman—he's one of the best saxophonists of the past twenty years. Nov. 19: The **JAZZ PASSENGERS,** with **DEBORAH HARRY.** The Passengers still enjoy a joke more than your average band, but these days they take themselves quite seriously as musicians—a fact that has helped them survive while other eighties downtown figures have fallen. At their least affected, the Passengers make clever, uncategorizable music. With the formidable Deborah Harry in tow, they should be on their best behavior. Nov. 21: **DAVE HOLLAND.** What is Holland's greatest gift—his extraordinary bass work or his knack for assembling first-rate bands? Holland (who comes to New York far too rarely for a certified jazz titan) has kept his mind open: fashionable neoclassicism may hold no interest for him, but relentless swinging still does. Saxophonist and composer **ROSCOE MITCHELL,** who plays on Nov. 22, is the most cerebral member of the Art Ensemble of



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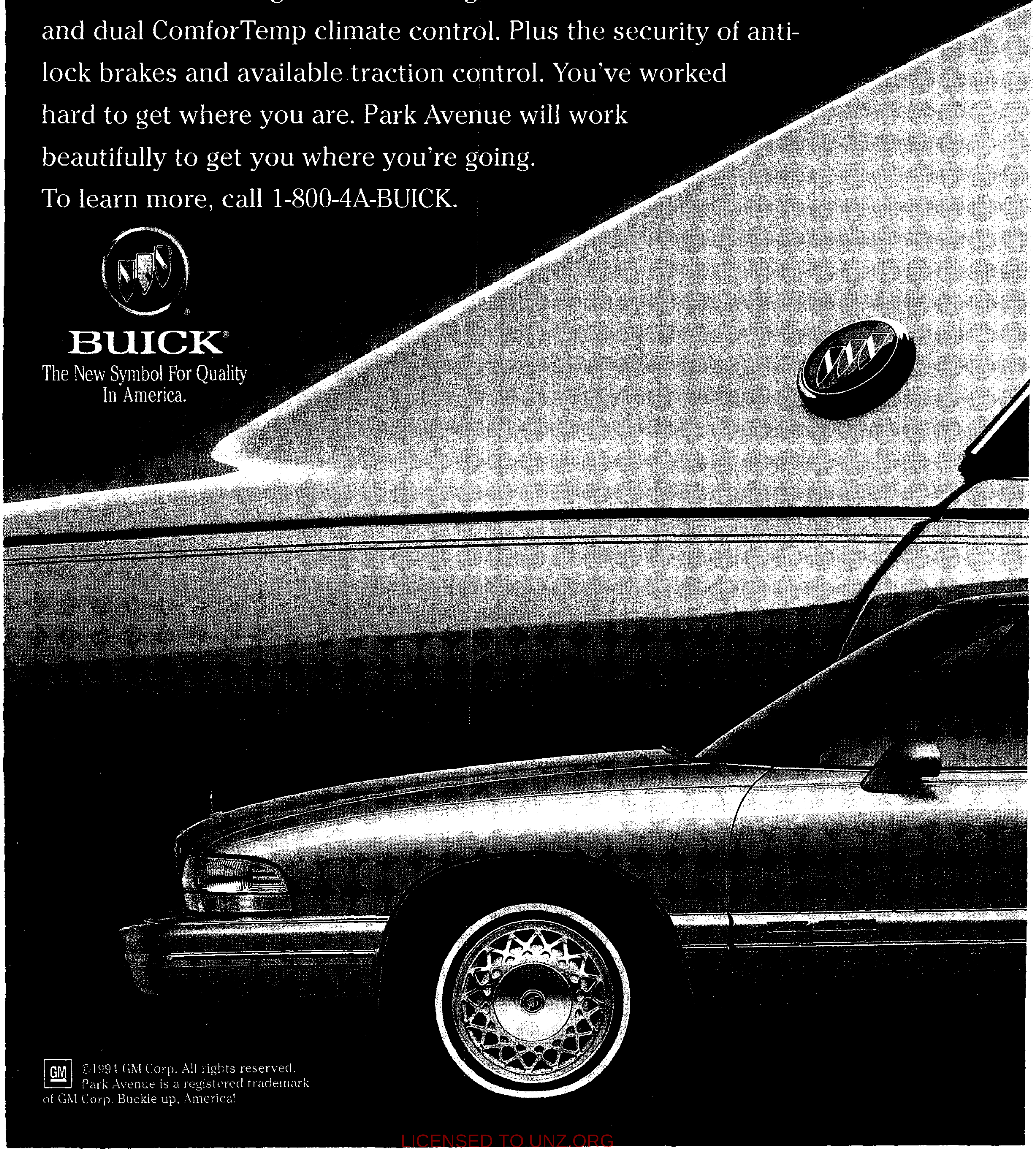

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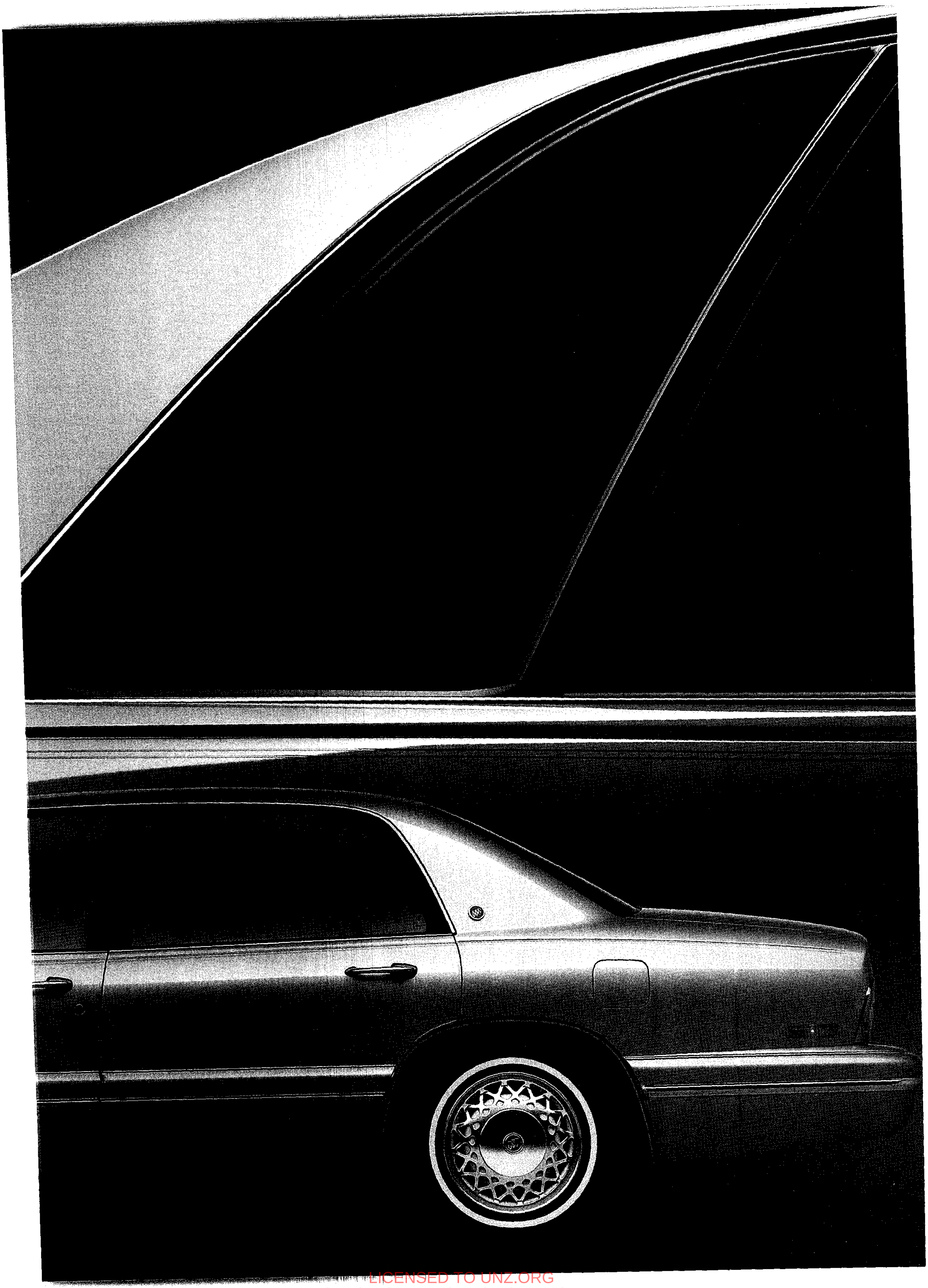

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Chicago, and his work navigates the uncharted seas between new jazz, new classical, and new sounds altogether. . . . ¶ Downstairs, in the AlterKnit Theatre, keyboardist and tenor-horn player **DJANGO BATES**, who's best known for his work with the British band Loose Tubes, is in on Nov. 19.

LE MADELEINE, 403 W. 43rd St. (246-2993)—Every Sunday evening, guitar great **GENE BERTONCINI** lights up this cozy Hell's Kitchen bistro with his simmering melodicism and chordal grace.

METROPOLIS, 31 Union Square W. (675-2300)—The basement of this swank café is now hosting a series of high-profile gigs. **TERENCE BLANCHARD**, the only young trumpeter within spitting distance of Wynton Marsalis's virtuosity, leads a polished quartet on Nov. 17. Nov. 18-19: **RAY BARRETTO AND NEW WORLD SPIRIT.** Tuesdays are given over to the **GEORGE GEE ORCHESTRA**, a seventeen-piece swing band.

MICHAEL'S PUB, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—On Mondays, Woody Allen continues his night job as clarinet player in the **NEW ORLEANS FUNERAL AND RAGTIME ORCHESTRA**, a Dixieland-jazz ensemble. Closed Sundays.

RAINBOW & STARS, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—A plush, old-fashioned night club, sixty-five floors above it all, complete with Art Deco fixtures, intimate glitter, and a panoramic view as dizzying as the tab. Cabaret great **LORNA LUFT** is currently in the midst of a monthlong run. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in the Rainbow Room, there's a revolving dance floor and swinging big-band music courtesy of the Rainbow Room Orchestra, featuring vocalists Michael Andrew and Claudette Sierra. Closed Mondays.

RUSSIAN TEA ROOM, 150 W. 57th St. (265-0947)—Borscht, blini, and other things to make the heart beat faster. **MARIN MAZZIE**, from the Broadway musical "Passion," plays on Nov. 20.

SMALLS, 183 W. 10th (929-7565)—A new contender in New York's ever-changing jazz topography, this aptly named club features young and up-and-coming players jamming late into the night.

TATOU, 151 E. 50th St. (753-1144)—The **NAT JONES** trio entertains every weekend. Wednesday through Saturday, a saucy cabaret revue called "Just for Kicks." Dining.

TAVERN ON THE GREEN, Central Park W. at 67th St. (873-3200)—**TOMMY FLANAGAN** (currently in the misdt of a two-week run) now presides over all of jazz piano. Of a poetic cast, he unreels endlessly supple lines, paying them out at whatever speed they demand. He likes to spread the melody out in chords in the first chorus, then compress the song into brand-new single-note improvisations that contain sudden ascending arpeggios, beautiful little countermelodies, and patches of mock double time. Flanagan will feature tunes from his two recent CDs, "Let's" and "Lady Be Good . . . For Ella."

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Through Nov. 20: the **GERI ALLEN** trio. Allen is one of the most gifted and original pianists of her generation, and she keeps reinventing herself. If her latest recording, "Twenty One," is any indication, Allen now wants in on the mainstream. For this gig she'll have a crack rhythm section—**RON CARTER** on bass and **LENNY WHITE** on drums—to help her in her quest. Flutist **HOLLY HOFMANN** begins a weeklong run on Nov. 22. The **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA** holds sway on Mondays.

VISIONES, 125 Macdougal St., at W. 3rd St. (673-5576)—A tiny, low-key supper club where the jazz, like the Spanish-American cuisine, can take on a spicy, multicultural flavor. Nov. 16-19: The **JOE LOCKE** quintet.

ZINNO, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—The food is Italian and the musicians, who set up in a room between the bar and the dining room, are first-rate. Through Nov. 19: Bassist **MILT HINTON** and pianist **JANE JARVIS** are in the house. Nov. 20: Pianist **BARRY HARRIS** performs.

ART

Lumps with Lips

It's all too easy for a signature style to degenerate into mannerism, but after more than a decade, Carroll Dunham's version of biomorphic abstraction still has its seductive charm—maybe because his antic spirit keeps his pictures so lively. His color-soaked blobs seem to refer to the topography of the body (outside and inside), but, fuelled by fantasy, they metastasize into bulbous cartoon characters, science-fiction entities, and toothy, grinning flowers that might have been nurtured in the Little Shop of Horrors.

The best of Dunham's latest paintings at Sonnabend (420 West Broadway; through November 26) are copiously studded with painted Styrofoam polyps, which accentuate the almost gross tactile quality of his work. A single lumplike character, alive with perverse whims, recurs (in changing colors) throughout. Dunham has drawn on Surrealist prototypes for his protagonist's shifting appearance; Max Ernst's "Loplop" paintings hover in the background. But the artist's sensibility also has its Pop side. The Blue Meanies of "Yellow Submarine" are hovering, too, and, like them, Dunham's multi-lipped but otherwise formless beast looks a little scary—but fun.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—"The Violin Masterpieces of Guarneri del Gesù." Opens Nov. 22. Through Dec. 4. . . . ¶ "Painting and Illumination in Early Renaissance Florence, 1300-1450." Opens Nov. 18. . . . ¶ "Lucie Rie / Hans Coper: Masterworks by Two British Potters." . . . ¶ "Willem de Kooning: Paintings." (There is a concurrent show of de Kooning's work at the Stone gallery.) . . . ¶ "The Photographs of Édouard Baldus: Landscapes and Monuments of France." Shots from the nineteenth century. . . . ¶ "Ominous Hush: The Thunderstorm Paintings of Martin Johnson Heade." . . . ¶ "Origins of Impressionism" begins with paintings seen at the historic and influential Salon of 1859 and includes nudes, landscapes, and still-lifes. . . . ¶ Gowns, daywear, and costume jewelry by Mme. Grès, a French designer active from 1930 to 1988, are on display in the Costume Institute. Through Nov. 27. . . . ¶ "Pharaoh's Gifts: Stone Vessels from Ancient Egypt." . . . ¶ "Four Silk Kashan Rugs." . . . ¶ The Annenberg collection of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist works includes paintings by Picasso and Renoir. Through Nov. 27. . . . ¶ "Divine Protection: Batak Art of North Sumatra." Seventy primarily wooden works from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, ranging from puppets to a three-inch-square ritual book. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 11 W. 53rd St.—"Projects: Ann Hamilton." . . . ¶ "Rem Koolhaas and the Place of Public Architecture." . . . ¶ "A Century of Artists Books." . . . ¶ "New Photography 10: Shimon Attie, Abelardo Morell, Jorge Ribalta, Michal Rovner." . . . ¶ "Mapping" features some twenty works of art devoted to the role of cartographic fact and fantasy in contempo-

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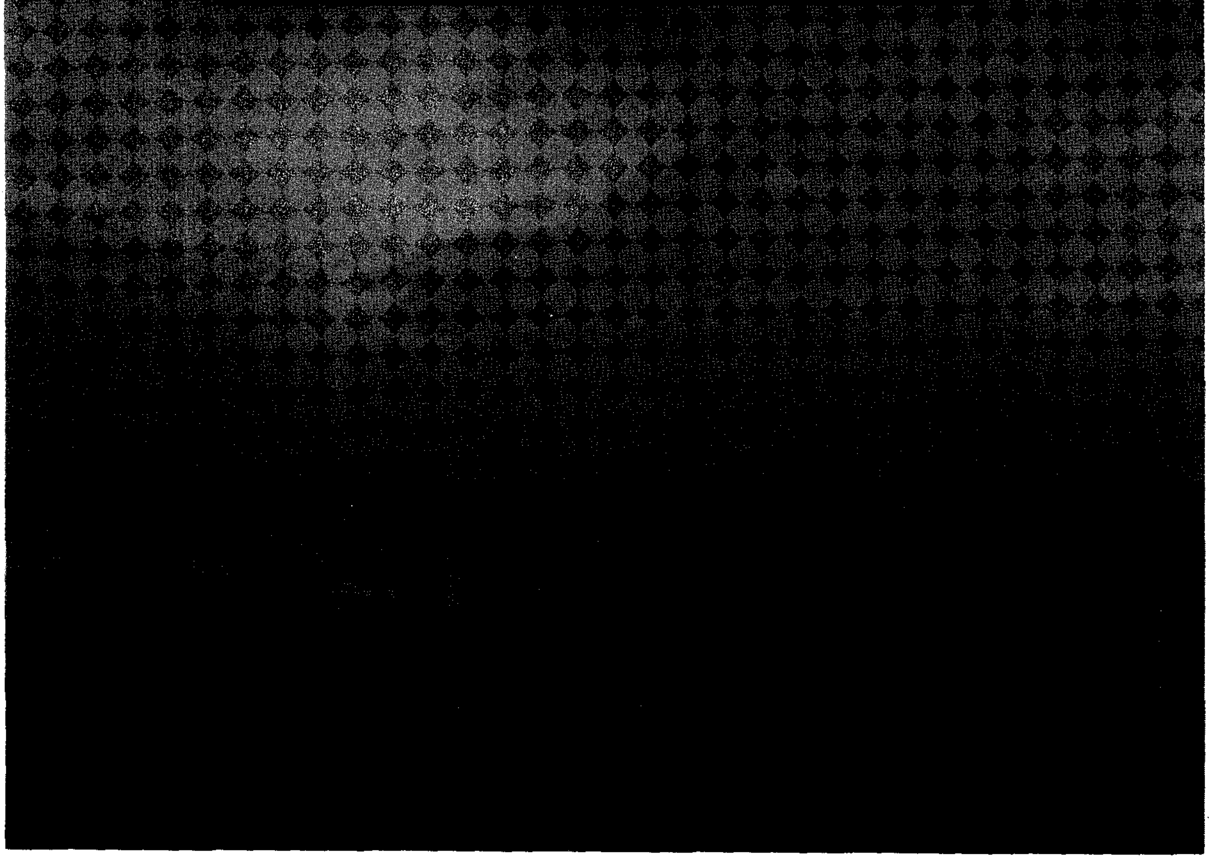

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ART–Cont'd

rary art. Through Dec. 20. . . . ¶ "American Politicians: Photographs from 1843 to 1993." . . . ¶ "Cy Twombly: A Retrospective." Nearly a hundred works, mostly paintings, by this heir to Abstract Expressionism. The show begins with Twombly's assemblage sculptures and ends with a new painting series, "The Four Seasons," done this year. (A concurrent show of his works is at the Gagosian gallery.) . . . ¶ "The Prints of Louise Bourgeois" focusses on the artist's etchings and lithographs. (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays and Fridays, noon to 8:30.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—"The Italian Metamorphosis, 1943-68." Chairs, typewriters, a case of fabulous shoes, a car, a vacuum cleaner—even some painting and sculpture. Although this massive exhibition, which examines the way Italy reinvented itself after the Second World War, sprawls around the rotunda with no real logic, it's a potent reminder of the impact that Italian art and design have had in the past half century. And it's a fun crawl. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 10 to 6, and Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 8.)

Guggenheim Museum SoHo, 575 Broadway—"Japanese Art After 1945: Scream Against the Sky." (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 6, and Saturday evenings until 8.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—"Black Male: Representations of Masculinity in Contemporary American Art." . . . ¶ "Jess: A Grand Collage, 1951-1993." Jess's world has room for everything. The quirky Bay Area collagist and painter's work falls into three categories: dense phantasmagoric collages, painstakingly pieced together from the artist's enormous collection of visual sources; "Salvages," found canvases over which the artist has painted a second image; and "Translations," heavily impastoed oils that faithfully transfer onto canvas found images such as Victorian engravings, a photograph of the Beatles, medical illustrations, etc. Through Dec. 4. . . . ¶ "Neil Jenney: Natural Rationalism." Through Dec. 11. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—"Royal Tombs of Sipán." Gold, silver, and gilded copper objects of the Moche, a pre-Inca civilization of northern Peru and one of the world's major ancient civilizations. The curators are probably right to identify Sipán as the richest burial site ever excavated in the New World. . . . ¶ "Empires Beyond the Great Wall: The Heritage of Genghis Khan" includes documents, ornamental plates, weapons, and silk garments from the steppes, along with full-sized replicas of a Mongolian nobleman's recently excavated tomb and a modern yurt. Through Nov. 27. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—"Realms of Heroism: Indian Paintings at the Brooklyn Museum." . . . ¶ Dale Chihuly's "The Brooklyn Wall," an installation of blown glass, is on view in the lobby. . . . ¶ Selected works of Leon Polk Smith, an American abstract painter. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

Alternative Museum, 594 Broadway—"Hell: Luis Cruz Azaceta, Selected Works, 1978-93." Through Nov. 23. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6.)

Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St.—"Passage to Vietnam: Through the Eyes of Seventy Photographers." Through Nov. 20. . . . ¶ "An Enduring Legacy: The Mr. and Mrs. John D. Rockefeller 3rd Collection." Every piece in this exquisite collection of Asian art coolly proclaims quality: a Korean stoneware jar is indescribably elegant; a copper sculpture from India—Krishna dancing over a vanquished demon, its serpentine tail echoing the god's heavenly form—is a little ode to joy. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 8; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Bard Graduate Center, 18 W. 86th St.—"Crosscurrents of Modernism: Selections from the Sydney and Frances Lewis Collection of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts." Opens Nov. 18. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5, and Thursday evenings until 8:30.)

Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1040 Grand Concourse—"Cartographies: Fourteen Artists from Latin America." (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

China Institute, 125 E. 65th St.—"At the Dragon Court." Gorgeous silk-and-gold-embroidered rank badges worn by the mandarins at the imperial court during the Ming and Qing dynasties (from the late-fourteenth to early-twentieth centuries). (Open Mondays through Saturdays, 10 to 5, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—"Good Offices and Beyond: The Evolution of the Workplace" surveys the development of equipment designed to manage paper, numbers, time, and information, beginning with the invention of the paper clip in 1900 and ending with a concept model for a personal digital assistant (non-human, that is). . . . ¶ "The Structure of Style: Dutch Modernism in the Applied Arts 1880-1930." Selected ceramics, magazine covers, and glassware, among other objects, detail a period of increasing industrialization in Europe. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Dia Center for the Arts, 548 W. 22nd St.—"Worlds Envisioned: Alighiero e Boetti and Frédéric Bruly Bouabré." . . . ¶ "Andy Warhol: *The Last Supper Paintings*." Done just before Warhol died in 1986, this series includes "Sixty Last Suppers," a huge silkscreen multiple in classic Warhol style, and another huge canvas in which bits and pieces of the Leonardo have been hand-drawn (with the aid of a projector) and then painted in flat patches of color, like a paint-by-number picture. . . . ¶ Irish artist James Coleman's "Projected Images, 1972-94" includes "La Tache Aveugle," "Seeing for Oneself," and "I.N.I.T.I.A.L.S." (Open Thursdays through Sundays, noon to 6.)

Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St.—"John Constable: Drawings, Watercolors, Oil Sketches, and Paintings from a Private Collection." (Open daily, except Mondays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St.—"Ôtsu-e: Japanese Folk Paintings." Opens Nov. 16. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 5.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—"Jewish Life in Tsarist Russia: A World Rediscovered." . . . ¶ "Not by Bread Alone: Spiritual Art for the Home." Close to fifty works of Jewish ceremonial art. . . . ¶ "Mario Cavaglieri: The Glittering Years, 1912-22" features thirty-six paintings, both interiors and portraits, by Cavaglieri (1887-1969), an Italian Jew, whose work recalls the bright colors and thick brushwork of the Fauves. (Open Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 11 to 5:45; Tuesdays, 11 to 8.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—"The Thaw Collection: Master Drawings and New Acquisitions." The word "great" is overused in the art world: it should be reserved for occasions like this one. All the major schools are represented, but the French drawings are especially fine, from a sparkling gouache of the Villa d'Este, by Fragonard, to Étienne Louis Boullée's highly finished drawing of a visionary library. Not to mention the Cézannes. . . . ¶ " 'A Chief of Ideas': Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century" highlights the writer's longtime love affairs with Mme. du Châtelet and his niece Mme. Denis. Through Nov. 20. . . . ¶ " 'No Small Pleasure': Benjamin Franklin as Public Servant." Through Nov. 20. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 10:30 to 5; Saturdays, 10:30 to 6; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Museo del Barrio, Fifth Ave. at 104th St.—"Recovering Popular Culture," the second part of the series "Artists Talk Back: Visual Conversations with El Museo," includes a bodega exhibit, work by contemporary craftspeople, and an exhibit pairing work from the permanent collection with that of contemporary artists. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5.)

Museum for African Art, 593 Broadway—"Exhibition-*ism*: Museums and African Art." (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 10:30 to 5:30; Saturdays, noon to 8; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Museum of American Folk Art, Columbus Ave. at 65th St.—"Every Picture Tells a Story: Word and Image in American Folk Art." Everything from a pre-Revolutionary illustrated birth certificate to a more contemporary text: "Try Me," painted on tin roofing. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11:30 to 7:30.)

Museum of the City of New York, Fifth Ave. at 104th St.—"Recent Acquisitions: Presents of the Past." . . . ¶ "A New York Holiday." . . . ¶ "The Making of a Mural: Reginald Marsh at the Custom House." . . . ¶ "Broadway Cavalcade: From the Battery to Harlem" follows the history of New York's diagonal boulevard from its origins as an Indian footpath to its fame as the Great White Way. (Open Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

National Academy of Design, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—"Ferdinand Hodler: Views and Visions." Opens Nov. 18. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5; Friday evenings until 8, with no admission charge after 5.)

National Museum of the American Indian, 1 Bowling Green—"Creation's Journey: Masterworks of Native American Identity and Belief." . . . ¶ "All Roads Are Good: Native Voices on Life and Culture." . . . ¶ "This Path We Travel: Celebrations of Contemporary Native American Creativity." (Open daily, 10 to 5:30.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—"Garbage! The History and Politics of Trash in New York City." . . . ¶ "e.e. cummings @ 100: An Anniversary Exhibition." . . . ¶ "The Raw and the Cooked: Images of Food from the Renaissance to the Present." On the menu are a Dürer engraving of Adam and Eve sharing an apple, and a Berenice Abbott photograph of potatoes. . . . ¶ "Broken Rules and Double Crosses: Ken Campbell, an Artist's Books." (Open Mondays, Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, 10 to 6; Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 6.)

New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Lincoln Center—"Georges Barrère and the Flute in America." . . . ¶ "Screams on Screen: 100 Years of Horror Films." . . . ¶ "New Performance in Found Spaces: Documentary Photographs by Tom Brazil and Dona Ann McAdams." (Open Mondays and Thursdays, noon to 8; Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, noon to 6.)

Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St.—"From the Studio: Artists-in-Residence, 1993-94" features work by Bright Bimpong, Russell Malcolm Hamilton, and Marilyn Nance. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

"The Heritage of Genghis Khan," at the American Museum of Natural History.

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6. The following lists lead off with new shows.)

Morris Graves—Thirty floral paintings from the past three decades, by an eighty-four-year-old artist. Opens Nov. 16. Through Dec. 20. (Schmidt Bingham, 41 W. 57th St.)

George Nick—Landscapes (the Maine coast, Capri) and cityscapes (New York City, Boston) with skewed viewpoints. Opens Nov. 22. Through Dec. 17. (Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St.)

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Jean-Michel Basquiat (1960-88)—Paintings with a black-and-white palette. Through Jan. 7. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)

Corneille—Paintings and works on paper, some of which reveal primitive influences, by a founder of the Cobra group. Through Nov. 26. (Avanti, 22 E. 72nd St. Open Mondays.)

Willem de Kooning—Fifty-five paintings from the early thirties to the late sixties. Through Jan. 22. (A retrospective of the artist's work is currently on view at the Metropolitan Museum.) (Stone, 113 E. 90th St.)

Niki de Saint Phalle—A double show of "Tableaux Éclatés," paintings affixed with colorful figures and viewer-activated sensors that cause the figures to break apart and come together again. Through Dec. 17. (Davidson and James Goodman, both at 41 E. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Alberto Giacometti (1901-66)—Sixty-three sculptures and ten paintings, ranging from the early twenties to 1965. Through Dec. 10. General admission is five dollars. (Acquavella, 18 E. 79th St. Open Mondays.)

Judy Glantzman—Paintings of female figures, investigating female adolescence and womanhood. Through Dec. 3. (Blum Helman, 20 W. 57th St.)

Rebecca Horn—New mechanical sculptures and an installation. Through Dec. 31. (Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

William King—A retrospective covering forty years of work in wood. Through Nov. 26. (Dintenfass, 50 W. 57th St.)

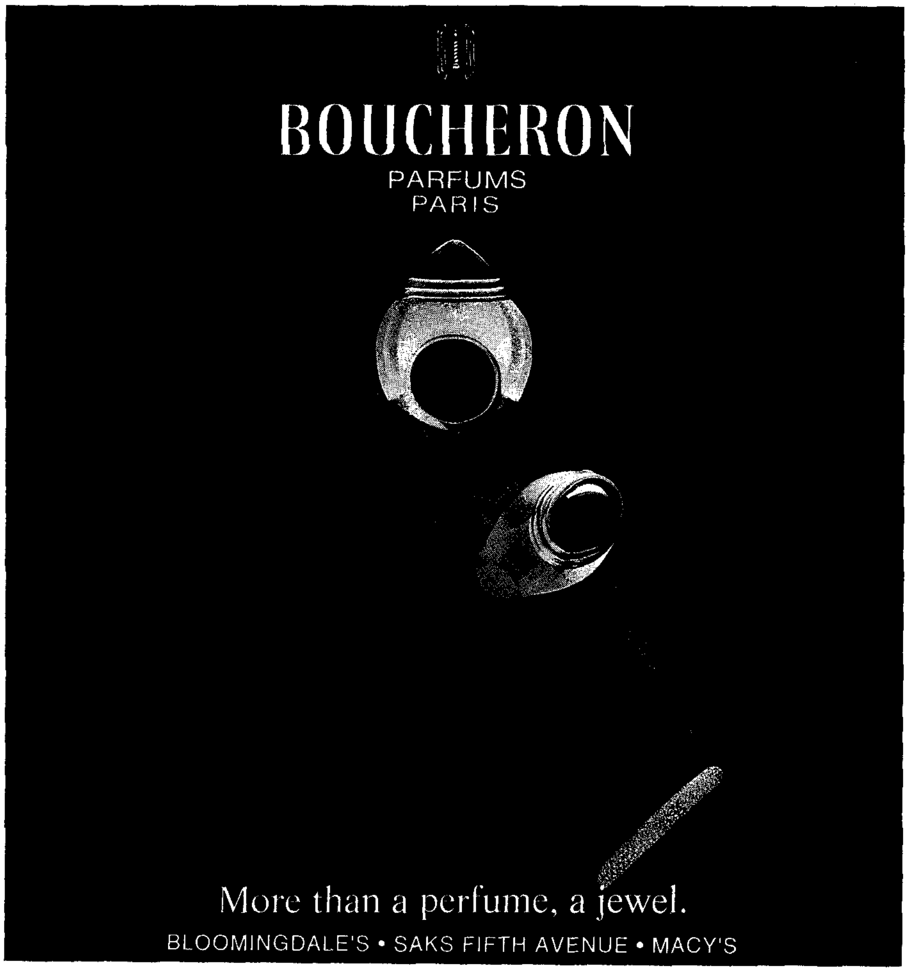
Barnett Newman (1905-70) / **Kiki Smith**—"The Sublime Is Now," a show of formative works (1944-49) by one of this century's most important painters. / Collages and lithographs—new mediums for the artist—depicting body parts. Through Nov. 26. (Pace, 32 E. 57th St.)

Richard Serra—Black-and-white crayon-stick drawings of loose rectangles. Through Dec. 23. (Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St.)

Steve Wheeler (1912-91)—Intricate modernist paintings indebted to Native American art, in a show inaugurating the gallery's new uptown space. Through Dec. 17. (Snyder, 20 W. 57th St.)

"The Box: From Duchamp to Horn"—Including works by Joseph Cornell, Lucas Samaras, and Sol LeWitt. Through Dec. 10. (Ubu, 16 E. 78th St.)

"Drawn to Text: Comix Artists as Book Illustrators"—An international survey of the history of alternative comics that also shows



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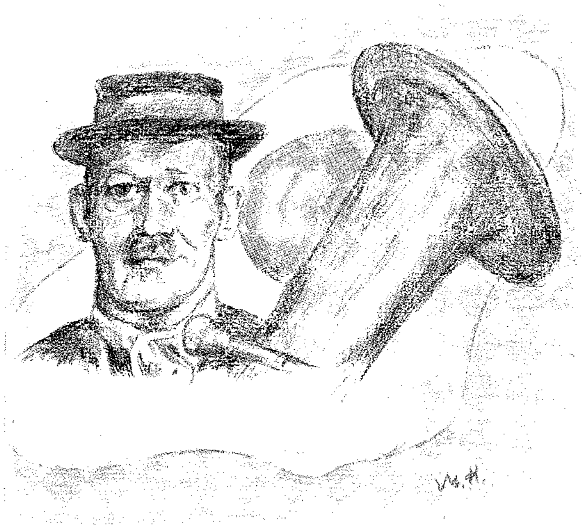
ART—Cont'd

how Robert Crumb, Javier Mariscal, Lorenzo Mattotti, Jacques Tardi, and Art Spiegelman approach book illustrations. Through Jan. 17. (Galerie St. Etienne, 24 W. 57th St.)

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

Charles Arnoldi—Abstract paintings reflecting the environment in California, where the artist lives. Opens Nov. 19. Through Dec. 30. (Cowles, 420 West Broadway.)

Mike Cockrill / Peter Mayer—Paintings on the theme of the American Dream. / Representational cityscapes. Opens Nov. 18. Through Dec. 24. (Foster, 62 Crosby St.)



Self-portrait by Martin Kippenberger (Nolan-Eckman).

Cheri Samba—Paintings with social commentary, by an African artist. Opens Nov. 16. Through Dec. 15. (Nosei, 100 Prince St.)

Lee Tracy / Mark Wright—Abstract paintings incorporating figures and objects. / Large canvases based on photographs of human cells. Opens Nov. 17. Through Jan. 8. (Lannon, 530 W. 22nd St. Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Allan Wexler—Two new sculptures of a mobile, expandable kitchen unit and a pre-fab house. Opens Nov. 19. Through Dec. 23. (Feldman, 31 Mercer St.)

Michael Zwack—Paintings and sculptures with images reflecting the artist's memories of his travels. Opens Nov. 18. Through Dec. 23. (Marcus, 578 Broadway.)

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Richard Artschwager—A witty suite of packing cases in strange, bulky shapes, from an artist who knows how to make the commonplace threateningly enigmatic. Constructed of unfinished plywood and studded with rivets, the containers forthrightly invoke Magritte's upright coffins. (Charles Addams also comes to mind.) Through Dec. 17. (Boone, 417 West Broadway.)

Martin Kippenberger—"A Man and His Golden Arm," bronze reliefs with multimedia elements, by the German prince of neo-Dada dementia. Kippenberger will do just about anything to avoid making a conventional art object. The current show includes his "Frank Sinatra Series," a suite of thirty drawings on hotel stationery that reproduce paintings by—yes—the Chairman of the Board. Through Dec. 22. (Nolan-Eckman, 560 Broadway.)

Lucas Samaras—No one would guess that these objects came from Samaras's studio. Geometric sculptures (he calls them "cubes," but they're not), covered in a gray Formica-like substance known as Nevamar, look like the remnants of a lost period from Louise Nevelson's career; a series of trapezoids carved into square plaques of the same stuff recalls the cool, understated early work of Richard Artschwager. The old, Dionysian Samaras seeps through in "Pragmata," a series of twenty-four bronzes with luscious surfaces that invite fondling. Through Nov. 26. (Pace, 142 Greene St.)

Rudolf Stingel—Large oil-and-enamel-on-canvas abstractions by an Italian-born artist with a pronounced conceptual bent. In "Instructions" (1989), Stingel used photographs and text (in six languages) to document his distinctive method for making paintings. In this show, the how-to manual is a cast-polyurethane sculpture resembling the Hindu god Shiva brandishing one of Stingel's painting tools (air-brush, scraper, etc.) in each of his six arms. Through Nov. 26. (Cooper, 155 Wooster St.)

Carroll Dunham—Paintings. Through Nov. 26. (Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway.)

Rafael Ferrer—Tropical landscapes, a painted tent called "El Gran Canibal," and sculptures of pineapples. Through Dec. 7. (Hoffman, 429 West Broadway.)

Ellsworth Kelly—Recent paintings in the inaugural show of a new satellite space for the uptown gallery. Through Jan. 29. (Marks, 522 W. 22nd St. Thursdays through Sundays, noon to 6.)

Constance Kheel—Paintings with circles, meant to evoke celestial images. Through Dec. 12. (Vega, 107 Mercer St.)

Ellen Lanyon—Two series of paintings, the first of metaphysical landscapes and the second of mythical figures in classical friezes. Through Dec. 3. (Zarre, 48 Greene St.)

Roxie Munro—Cityscapes. Through Dec. 10. (Bibro, 584 Broadway.)

Dennis Oppenheim—Witty conceptual floor and wall sculptures, many of them kinetic. Through Nov. 26. (Blum Helman Warehouse, 80 Greene St.)

Tom Palmore—Whimsical paintings of animals. Through Dec. 8. (Cacciola, 125 Wooster St.)

Cy Twombly—"Untitled Painting," a monumental, primarily abstract triptych, begun in Italy in 1979. Through Dec. 17. (A retrospective of the artist's work is at the Museum of Modern Art.) (Gagosian, 136 Wooster St.)

ANTIQUES

"Modernism: A Century of Style & Design"—In this ninth annual sale, forty galleries will offer paintings, sculptures, and photographs, dating from 1870 to 1970, including an Antonio Jacobsen painting of a ship in the New York harbor ($20,000) and a Kenneth Noland painting, "Rize" ($175,000). (7th Regiment Armory, Park Ave. at 66th St. Nov. 17-18, from 11 to 9; Nov. 19, from 11 to 8; and Nov. 20, from 11 to 6. Tickets at the door on the days of the sale.)

"The Manhattan Antiques & Collectibles Triple Pier Expo"—Don your most comfortable walking shoes for this expansive (more than a thousand dealers) show, which fills three passenger-ship terminals. Pier 88 is devoted to Art Deco, *Art Moderne*, and fifties material. (Twelfth Ave. at 48th St. Nov. 19, from 11 to 6, and Nov. 20, from 11 to 7.) Pier 90 focusses on decorative arts and Americana. (Twelfth Ave. at 50th St. Nov. 19, from 9 to 6, and Nov. 20, from 11 to 5.) Pier 92 is turned over to antique European, Oriental, and traditional furniture and decorative accessories. (Twelfth Ave. at 52nd St. Nov. 19, from 10 to 6, and Nov. 20, from 11 to 6.) (Tickets at the door on the days of the event. The Expo continues the following weekend.)

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PHOTOGRAPHY

Photo Ops

THERE has always been a symbiotic relationship between image-making and power, but no study of the way that photography intertwines with politics has approached the scale of curator Susan Kismaric's "American Politicians: Photographs from 1843 to 1993," on display at the Museum of Modern Art through January 3. The show bears witness to the metamorphoses in our notions of the private and the public self, and it's fascinating for what it reveals about the role of the camera not just in politics but, by extension, in all public life. The enormous variety of images ranges from the well-known, carefully posed Brady and Gardner portraits of Lincoln to more recent and spontaneous-seeming pictures that have had just as much to do with our perceptions of public figures—Jacques Lowe's images of the Kennedys, for example. Viewed from this distance, Lowe's photographs, with their Camelot-era exhilaration, seem almost surreal, like frozen slices of performance art. But then politics has always been a performance art.

ILSE BING—Vintage photographs of Parisian dance halls. Through Jan. 7. (Houk Friedman, 851 Madison Ave., at 76th St.)

ROBERT FRANK—Twenty-seven rarely seen images from the photographer of "The Americans." Through Nov. 23. (Pace-MacGill, 32 E. 57th St.)

DAVID LEVINTHAL—Fifteen large-scale prints that examine Nazi iconography and the horror of the Holocaust. Through Dec. 5. (Borden, 560 Broadway.)

GJON MILI (1904-84)—Photographs of actors, entertainers, and other celebrities, taken between 1930 and 1970. Through Dec. 3. (Greenberg, 120 Wooster St.)

MARIO CRAVO NETO—Black-and-white prints by a Brazilian photographer. Through Dec. 3. (Witkin, 415 West Broadway.)

NICHOLAS NIXON—Photographs of schoolchildren and nurses. Through Nov. 26. (Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

LEO RUBINFIEN—Photographs taken from airplanes. Through Dec. 10. (Mann, 42 E. 76th St.)

KENNETH SNELSON—Three decades of panoramic photographs of urban sites. Through Dec. 3. (Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St.)

DEBORAH TURBEVILLE—Black-and-white photographs of palatial mansions in Newport. Through Nov. 30. (Staley-Wise, 560 Broadway.)

NICK WAPLINGTON—More than ten images by an artist best known for surreptitiously placing his own image within his landscape photography. Through Dec. 3. (Burden, 20 E. 23rd St.)

GARRY WINOGRAND—New York City burlesque houses, circa 1954. Through Nov. 26. (Benrubi, 52 E. 76th St.)

DORIS ULMANN (1882-1934)—Vintage images of the Appalachia and Gullah regions of South Carolina. Through Dec. 3. (Gallery 292, at 120 Wooster St.)

INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY, 1130 Fifth Ave. at 94th St.—A retrospective of the work of Cornell Capa, featuring work from *Life* and other magazines. . . . ¶ Forty images of contemporary Russian life, by Hans-Jürgen Burkhard. Through Nov. 27. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY MIDTOWN, Sixth Ave. at 43rd St.—"Talking Pictures," a delightful exhibition that features photographs and commentary by individuals not generally associated with the medium—Dennis Hopper on Henri Cartier-Bresson, Tony Bennett on Gjon Mili, John Epperson (a.k.a. Lypsinka) on a clip from "Bye Bye Birdie." The show is organized around a simple and ingenious conceit. You wander around with what looks like a cellular phone, dial the number of a particular photograph (there are more than fifty), and listen to, say, Naomi Campbell musing on a great anonymous photograph of Josephine Baker. Through Dec. 4. . . . ¶ Photographs by Arthur Rothstein, who is best known for his work for *Look*. . . . ¶ More than thirty black-and-white photographs of Appalachian Kentuckians, by Shelby Lee Adams. Through Nov. 27. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

(See the museum listings for photography exhibitions at the Metropolitan Museum, the Museum of Modern Art, the Asia Society, and the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.)

Self-portrait in Prague by Nick Waplington (Burden).

CLASSICAL MUSIC

Flavors of Schubert

SCHUBERTIANS have a lot to smile about. New CD releases include a visionary C-Minor Sonata (D. 958) in the pianist András Schiff's sonata series (on London) and a mercurial A-Major Sonata (D. 664) in the eighth volume of Michel Dalberto's impressive "complete piano works" project (on Denon). There's distinguished lieder-singing in a variety of flavors, including a reissue (on Berlin Classics) of a supernal 1976 program of Goethe settings from the late American soprano Arleen Auger. Out of the lower octave come a large-scale, ebullient greatest-hits collection from the Welsh baritone du jour Bryn Terfel (on Deutsche Grammophon), an intelligent and vocally pure recital from the English baritone Simon Keenlyside (on EMI, but not yet released in America), and a nuanced "Schwanengesang" from the German baritone Wolfgang Holzmaier (with which Philips promises to bring in the new year).

Aficionados should get out from under their earphones long enough to catch two performances that filter Schubert's music through later sensibilities. On November 18, at Avery Fisher Hall, Leon Botstein will lead the American Symphony Orchestra in orchestral adaptations, by such admirers as Liszt and Brahms, of Schubert's songs and piano pieces. Downtown, at La Mama, the German actor Michael Altmann concludes his run in a staged "Winterreise," in which Schubert's song cycle—twenty-four perspectives on estrangement and despair—has been transformed into avant-garde theatre. Both will leave purists aghast, but music lovers who brave these unusual points of view will likely return to their disks with a new appreciation.

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera is 362-6000; for Alice Tully Hall, 875-5050; for Avery Fisher Hall, 875-5030; for Carnegie Hall and Weill Recital Hall, 247-7800; and for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719.)

OPERA

METROPOLITAN OPERA—**RIGOLETTO,** with Sumi Jo, Ramon Vargas, and Paolo Gavanelli; conducted by Christian Badea. (Nov. 16 at 8 and Nov. 19 at 1:30.) . . . **DON GIOVANNI,** with Sharon Sweet, Carol Vaness, Hei-Kyung Hong, Stanford Olsen, James Morris, and Bryn Terfel; Leopold Hager. (Nov. 17 and Nov. 21 at 8.) . . . **LADY MACBETH OF MTSENSK,** by Shostakovich, with Maria Ewing, Vladimir Galouzine, Mark Baker, and Sergei Koptchak; James Conlon. (Nov. 18 at 8.) . . . With Vladimir Bogachov instead of Mr. Galouzine. (Nov. 22 at 8.) . . . **CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA** (with Maria Guleghina, Kristján Jóhannsson, and Bruno Pola) and **PAGLIACCI** (with Ljuba Kazarnovskaya, Vladimir Atlantov, Louis Quilico, and Mark Oswald); Mr. Badea conducting both. (Nov. 19 at 8.) (Metropolitan Opera House.)

NEW YORK CITY OPERA—Final performances of Leonard Bernstein's "Wonderful Town." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Nov. 16-18 at 8; Nov. 19 at 1:30 and 8; and Nov. 20 at 1:30.)

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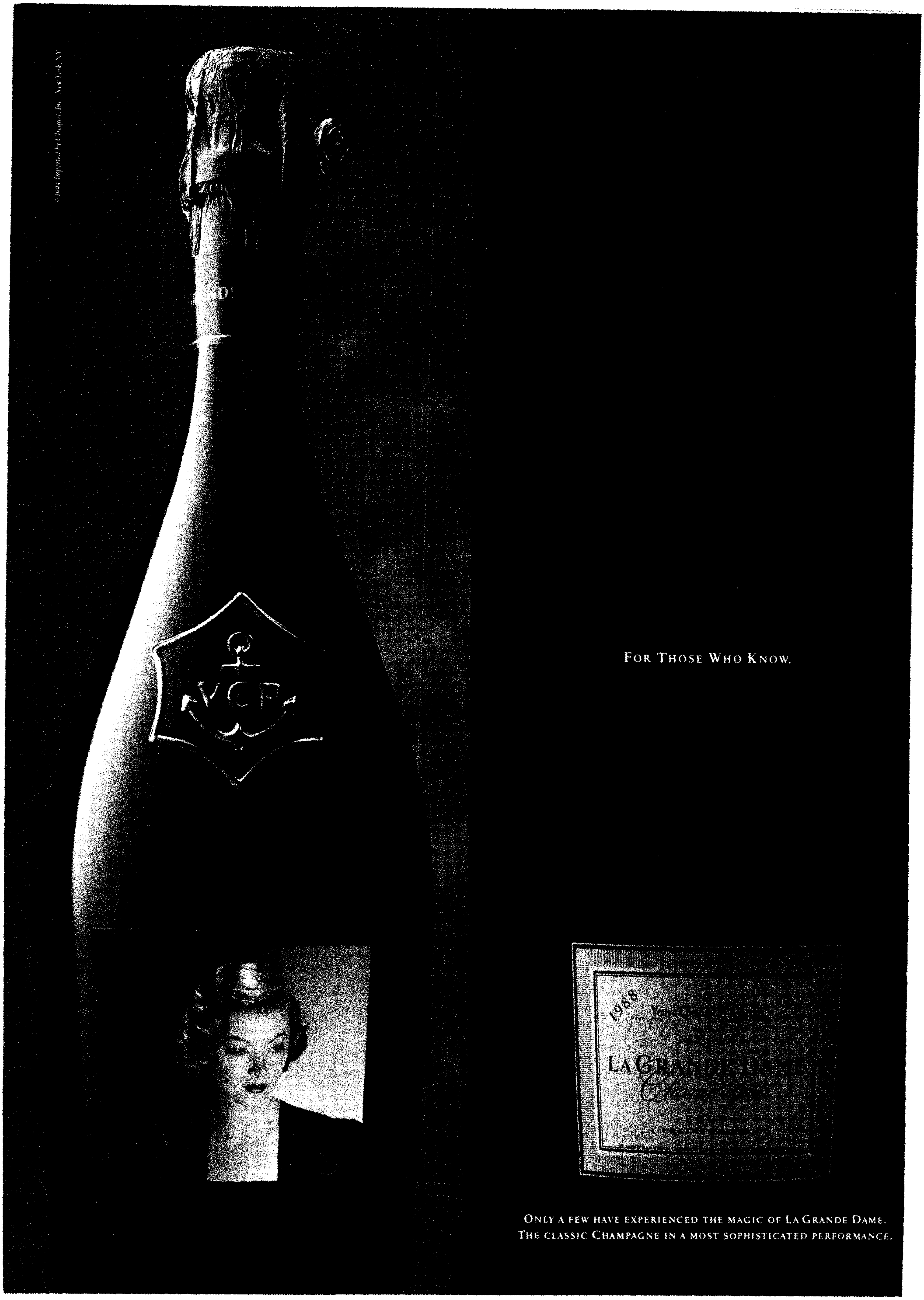
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CLASSICAL MUSIC—Cont'd

Juilliard Opera Center—Presenting Rutland Boughton's "The Immortal Hour," so popular in its day that it ran in London for three hundred and seventy-six consecutive performances in the early nineteen-twenties. (Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th St. 769-7406. Nov. 16 and Nov. 18 at 8 and Nov. 20 at 2.)

Operas by Robert Ashley—Four short, interrelated operas, presented in pairs. Nov. 16 and Nov. 18: "Improvement (Don Leaves Linda)" and "Foreign Experiences." . . . ¶ Nov. 17 and Nov. 19: "eL/Aficionado" (featuring Thomas Buckner) and "Now Eleanor's Idea" (with Joan La Barbara). (Carey Playhouse, Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100. Evenings at 8.)

"Winterreise"—Schubert's song cycle, sung and acted cabaret-style by Michael Altmann, in a production directed by Gabriele Jakobi. Achim Gieseler leads his own musical arrangement for a small, curiously constituted chamber ensemble. (La Mama, 74A E. 4th St. 475-7710. Nov. 17-19 at 8.)

Measured Breaths Theatre Company—The ensemble, which can be depended upon to provide an unusual perspective on the operas it performs, offers a staging, in English, of Rameau's "Those Fabulous Americans" (better known as "Les Indes Galantes," under which title it was premièred, in 1735). Braden Toan conducts. (Ohio Theatre, 66 Wooster St. Nov. 17-21 at 8. For information about tickets, call 334-8402.)

"Der Kaiser von Atlantis"—A satiric one-act opera by Victor Ullmann, written in 1944 at the Terezin concentration camp, where the interned artists' creations provided fodder for Nazi propaganda. The show made it as far as rehearsals before the authorities put the kibosh on it, as well as on Ullmann and his librettist Petr Kien, both of whom were immediately removed to Auschwitz for execution. Ullmann's Third String Quartet and "Three Yiddish Songs" complete the program, which will feature numerous singers, the Arden String Quartet, and the Northeastern Chamber Players. Steven Lipsitt conducts. (Merkin Concert Hall. Nov. 21 at 8.)

"Reel-to-Reel Harmony"—Details of the Brooklyn Museum's festival of films featuring great classical singers can be found under "Film Libraries" in The Movies.

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—Franz Welser-Möst conducts Arvo Pärt's Symphony No. 3, Ravel's G-Major Piano Concerto (with Krystian Zimerman), and Beethoven's Symphony No. 4. (Avery Fisher Hall. Nov. 17 and Nov. 19 at 8, and Nov. 18 at 11 A.M.)

Little Orchestra Society—This season, the orchestra turns its attention to concerted works that spotlight unusual instruments. This concert includes Vazgen Muradian's "Armenian Folk Suite," in which George Mgrdichian will play the oud, a Middle Eastern ancestor of the lute. Other works based on folk models (by Prokofiev, Milhaud, Chávez, and others) complete the program. Dino Anagnost conducts, and singer Karen Akers makes a guest appearance. (Alice Tully Hall. Nov. 17 at 7.)

Houston Symphony Orchestra—Christoph Eschenbach conducts the New York première of Bright Sheng's Prelude for Orchestra, Brahms' Violin Concerto (with Joshua Bell), and Prokofiev's Symphony No. 5. (Carnegie Hall. Nov. 17 at 8.)

American Symphony Orchestra—Leon Botstein conducts orchestral adaptations of Schubert songs and piano pieces: Liszt's piano-and-orchestra version of the "Wanderer" Fantasy (featuring pianist Santiago Rodriguez), song orchestrations by Brahms (with baritone David Arnold), Felix Mottl's orchestration of the F-Minor Fantasia (D. 940), and Joachim's C-Major Symphony (derived from Schubert's Two-Piano "Grand Duo," D. 812). (Avery Fisher Hall. Nov. 18 at 7:30. . . . **NOTE:** In a pre-concert recital, beginning at 5:45 and open to ticket holders, pianists Todd Crow and Diane Walsh will perform D. 812 and D. 940 as Schubert created them.)

Juilliard Brass Ensemble—Philip Smith conducting. (Alice Tully Hall. Nov. 18 at 8. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 769-7406.)

Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra—At Carnegie Hall, Leonard Slatkin conducting. Nov. 18 at 8: The New York première of Nicholas Maw's "Odyssey," which, clocking in at ninety-five minutes, is touted as the longest strictly symphonic work ever written. So you get your money's worth. . . . ¶ Nov. 19 at 8: Mahler's Symphony No. 3, with mezzo-soprano Nancy Maultsby, the women of the Saint Louis Symphony Chorus, and the Boys Choir of Harlem.

I Cantori di New York—Mark Shapiro directs a-cappella works by Bach, Brahms, Nielsen, Ross Lee Finney, David Diamond, and Einojuhani Rautavaara. (Calvary Episcopal Church, Park Ave. S. at 21st St. Nov. 19 at 8. For information about tickets, call 439-4758.)

New York Chamber Symphony—Gerard Schwarz conducts Schumann's "Overture, Scherzo, and Finale," the New York première of Ellen Taaffe Zwilich's Double Concerto (with violinist Jaime Laredo and cellist Sharon Robinson), and Haydn's Symphony No. 103 (the "Drumroll"). (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100. Nov. 19 at 8 and Nov. 20 at 3.)

Pomerium—Alexander Blachly directs the vocal group in music from Renaissance Italy, by Dufay (including his motet "Nuper Rosarum Flores," sung at the dedication of Brunelleschi's dome for Florence's Duomo), Josquin Desprez (movements from his "Missa Hercules Dux Ferrarie"), Gesualdo, and Monteverdi. (Corpus Christi Church, 529 W. 121st St. 666-9266. Nov. 20 at 4.)

Juilliard Percussion Ensemble—Daniel Druckman oversees works by Reich and Xenakis. (Alice Tully Hall. Nov. 22 at 8. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 769-7406.)

RECITALS

Tokyo String Quartet—The ensemble continues its survey of Beethoven's string quartets by playing one in D Major (Op. 18, No. 3) and two in F Major (Op. 18, No. 1, and Op. 59, No. 1). (Avery Fisher Hall. Nov. 16 at 8.)

Emanuel Ax and Peter Serkin—The two pianists come together for a duo-piano recital comprising Brahms' two-piano versions of the "Variations on a Theme by Haydn" (Op. 56b) and F-Minor Sonata (Op. 34b—the work that started as a string quintet and that the composer would later transform into his Piano Quintet) and Schoenberg's Chamber Symphony No. 2 (Op. 38, in his own transcription). (Carnegie Hall. Nov. 16 at 8.)

Robert DeGaetano—Pianist, performing several of his own works, as well as music by Bach, Barber, Ravel, and Rachmaninoff. (Weill Recital Hall. Nov. 16 at 8.)

Branca Blowout—Glenn Branca leads his ensemble of nine electric guitars in the American premières of his Symphonies No. 8 and No. 10. (The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793. Nov. 16-20 at 8.)

Sonic Boom Festival—The conclusion of the third annual contemporary-music festival at Columbia University's Miller Theatre. Nov. 16 at 8: The New York New Music Ensemble performs acoustic and electronic works by Mary Wright, David Felder, Lou Harrison, and Jacob Druckman. . . . ¶ Nov. 19 at 7:30: Continuum offers music by Puerto Rican composers Rafael Aponte-Ledée, Hector Campos Parsi, Jack Delano, William Ortiz, Francis Schwartz, Roberto Sierra, and Javier de la Torre (most of whom are expected to attend). (Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799.)

Organ Recitals—Several recommendations for pipe fanciers. Nov. 16 at 8: Stephen Hamilton, with colleagues, in an all-Franck evening. (Church of the Holy Trinity, 316 E. 88th St. 289-4100.) . . . ¶ Nov. 20 at 4: English organist David Liddle performs his own "Symphonic Labyrinth," as well as works by Bach, Widor, Alfred Hollins, and Frederic Wood. (Church of St. Ignatius Loyola, Park Ave. at 84th St. 288-2520.) . . .

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CLASSICAL MUSIC—Cont'd

¶ Nov. 22 at 1: The Dutch organist Peter Westerbrink plays works by Buxtehude, Bach, Johann Christian Kittel, and Mendelssohn. (Church of St. Francis of Assisi, 135 W. 31st St. No tickets necessary.)

Borodin String Quartet—At Alice Tully Hall. The foursome concludes its traversal of Shostakovich's string quartets. Nov. 16 at 8: The Quartets No. 10, No. 11, and No. 12. . . . **note:** The concert will be preceded at 7 by a bilingual reading of Russian poetry associated with the composer, open to ticket holders. . . . ¶ Nov. 20 at 8: The Quartets No. 13, No. 14, and No. 15. . . . **note:** The concert will be preceded at 7 by a performance of the composer's "Six Poems of Marina Tsvetayeva," open to ticket holders.

Bargemusic—Presenting Dohnányi's Serenade for String Trio, Shostakovich's E-Minor Piano Trio, and Schubert's almost never played F-Major Adagio and Rondo Concertante for Piano Quartet; with violinist Nai-Yuan Hu, violist Paul Coletti, cellist Fred Sherry, and pianist Hae Sun Paik. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 1-718 624-4061. Nov. 17 at 7:30 and Nov. 20 at 4.)

New York Philomusica—Performing Beethoven's E-Flat Major Piano Trio (Op. 1, No. 1), the Adagio from Berg's "Kammerconcert" (in the composer's version for clarinet, violin, and piano), and Dohnányi's Sextet. (Merkin Concert Hall. Nov. 17 at 8.)

Janos Starker—The cellist plays Beethoven's Sonatas No. 1, No. 2, and No. 4, as well as his "Twelve Variations on 'See the Conquering Hero Comes' from Handel's 'Judas Maccabaeus' "; with pianist Shigeo Neriki. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Nov. 18 at 8.)

David Ward—Performing works by Mozart, Haydn, C. P. E. Bach, and František Dussek, on a replica of an eighteenth-century Viennese fortepiano. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Nov. 19 at 7:30. For information about tickets, call 744-0764.)

Samuel Bartos—Performing Bach's "Goldberg" Variations on the harpsichord. (Le Refuge Inn, 620 City Island Ave., City Island, the Bronx. 1-718 885-2478. Nov. 20 at noon.)

Wilanow String Quartet—Performing quartets by Beethoven (in D Major, Op. 18, No. 3), Szymanowski (his Second), and Ravel. (Kosciuszko Foundation, 15 E. 65th St. 734-2130. Nov. 20 at 2:45.)

Deborah Voigt—Soprano, in her New York début recital, performing songs by Brahms, Wagner, Mascagni, Griffes, and Strauss; with pianist Warren Jones. (Alice Tully Hall. Nov. 20 at 3.)

New York Philharmonic Ensembles—Presenting Brahms' Two "Viola" Songs, Nielsen's Woodwind Quintet, a duo by François Devienne, and Mozart's B-Flat-Major Divertimento for String Trio (K. 563). (Merkin Concert Hall. Nov. 20 at 3.)

Orion String Quartet—Playing quartets by Haydn, Beethoven, and Brahms. (Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church, 85 S. Oxford St., Brooklyn. Nov. 20 at 3. For information about tickets, call 446-1900.)

"Guitar Among Others"—Classical guitarist Winslow Browning is joined by flutist Suzanne Gilchrest and oboist/English hornist John Frisch in chamber music by Haydn, Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, and others. (St. Luke in-the-Fields, 487 Hudson St., at Grove St. Nov. 20 at 4. Tickets at the door on the afternoon of the concert.)

Manderling String Quartet—The German foursome plays quartets by Georges Onslow, Berthold Goldschmidt (his Second), and Brahms (his Second). (Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St. 288-0700. Nov. 20 at 5.)

Salon Soirées—Violinist Hanne-berit Hahnemann and pianist Ilan Rechtman perform sonatas by Mozart. (Hotel Wales, Madison Ave. at 92nd St. Nov. 20 at 6 and 8. Admission is free, but call 876-6000 to reserve a seat.)

James King—The tenor performs his New York début recital—this after having sung a hundred and thirteen times at the Metropolitan Opera since his début, in 1966, most notably as a distinguished Wagnerian. Works by Schubert, Verdi, and Wagner (including excerpts from "Rienzi" and "Die Walküre") figure prominently on his program. Soprano Kathryn Chase and pianist David Triestram assist. (Alice Tully Hall. Nov. 21 at 8.)

Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center—The Society's "Music of Our Time" series opens with pianist Anne-Marie McDermott, percussionist John Ferrari, and the Orion String Quartet performing recent works by Peter Scott Lewis, Kenneth Frazelle, David Liptak, Oleg Felzer, and Eugene Phillips. (Walter Reade Theatre, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level. Nov. 21 at 8, with a pre-concert conversation beginning at 7:30. For information about tickets, call 875-5050.)

Music by Virko Baley—Six recent chamber works by the Ukrainian-American composer. (Weill Recital Hall. Nov. 21 at 8.)

Anthony de Mare—Pianist, performing Frederic Rzewski's "De Profundis" as well as operatic and tango transcriptions by Satie, Cage, Chester Biscardi, Yvar Mikhashoff, and others. (Bloomingdale House, 323 W. 108th St. 663-6021. Nov. 22 at 7.)

Montserrat Caballé—The soprano (assisted by pianist Manuel Burgueras) sings a wideranging program—but you're really going for the encores, of course. (Carnegie Hall. Nov. 22 at 8.)

Lydian String Quartet—Performing quartets by Irving Fine, Yehudi Wyner, and John Harbison (his Second). (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. Nov. 22 at 8.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Poetic—Longing to thumb through a volume of verse? Poets House (72 Spring St.) invites the public to browse through the twelve hundred and four new poetry books published over the past eighteen months. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 11 to 7, and Saturdays, 11 to 4. Through Nov. 19. No tickets necessary. . . . **note:** An installation by Louise Braverman, featuring poetry by June Jordan, Carolyn Forché, and Jane Reichhold, is on display in the window of Poets House, through Nov. 30.) . . . ¶ Nov. 17 at 7: Marilyn Hacker, Katha Pollitt, and others will discuss "The Poetry Audience of the Future." (Tickets at the door on the night of the talk.) . . . ¶ Nov. 18 at 7: Stephen Dunn, Suzanne Gardinier, and others will read from their own poetry. (Tickets at the door on the night of the reading.)

Eco Orgy—The millennium approaches. Here are some events to help you get ready. Nov. 18 at 8: A screening of the documentary "Ecological Design: Inventing the Future." . . . Nov. 19, from 9 to 5: A seminar about sustainable design. (Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. For information about tickets, call 860-6321.) . . . ¶ Nov. 19, from 7 to 11: A gala to celebrate the new edition of "The Millennium Whole Earth Catalog." (Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St. 860-6163.)

Here at The New Yorker—Philip Hamburger, who has contributed to this magazine for more than fifty years, will talk about his career in journalism. (New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. 930-0654. Nov. 21 at 6.)

Operatic Words—Poet John Ashbery and composer Roger Reynolds will present a collaborative effort, "last things, I think, to think about," which Mr. Reynolds calls "an opera in the mind." Baritone Phillip Larsen and pianist Aleck Karis will perform. The Messrs. Ashbery and Reynolds will discuss the work and answer questions. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. Nov. 17 at 8.)

Good Books—The Goddard Riverside Community Center will present its annual benefit book fair. (Columbus Ave. at 88th St. Nov. 19, from 10 to 6, and Nov. 20, from noon to 5. Tickets at the door on the days of the fair.)

Readings—Nov. 17 at 7:30: Mary Gordon and Allan Gurganus will read from their own work, in a benefit for the *Global City Press* and *Review*. (P.S. 41, 116 W. 11th St. Tickets at the door on the night of the reading.) . . . ¶ Nov. 20 at 4: Peter Gizzi and Jeffrey Gustavson will read from their own poetry. (Mazer Theatre, Educational Alliance, 197 E. Broadway, at Jefferson St. Admission by contribution.) . . . ¶ Nov. 22 at 7:30: A. R. Ammons and Anthony Hecht will read from their own poetry. (Dia Center for the Arts, 155 Mercer St. Tickets at the door on the night of the reading.)

Talk—Nov. 17 at 8:30 A.M.: John Gregory Dunne, Bret Easton Ellis, Tama Janowitz, Jamaica Kincaid, George Plimpton, and Kurt Vonnegut will prognosticate in a discussion titled "Whither Goes the Novel." Harold Evans is the host, and breakfast will be served. (mad.61, 10 E. 61st St. For more information, call 691-8543.)

SPORTS

TENNIS

Virginia Slims Championships—The annual Garden party for women's tennis greats. (Madison Square Garden. 465-6500. Nov. 16 at 5:30; Nov. 17-18 at 6; Nov. 19 at noon; and Nov. 20 at 12:45.)

BASKETBALL

Knicks—Vs. the Atlanta Hawks, Nov. 19 at 8:30. . . . ¶ Vs. the San Antonio Spurs, Nov. 21 at 7:30.

Nets—Vs. the Washington Bullets, Nov. 17 at 7:30. . . . ¶ Vs. the Los Angeles Clippers, Nov. 20 at 7.

FOOTBALL

Giants—Away until Dec. 11, when they'll host the Cincinnati Bengals.

Jets—Away until Nov. 27, when they'll host the Miami Dolphins.

(The Knicks play at Madison Square Garden, 465-6000; the Nets at the Meadowlands Arena, 1-201 935-3900; and the Giants and the Jets at Giants Stadium, the Meadowlands, 1-201 935-8111.)

FOR KIDS

(A list of activities for children and their parents or other adults.)

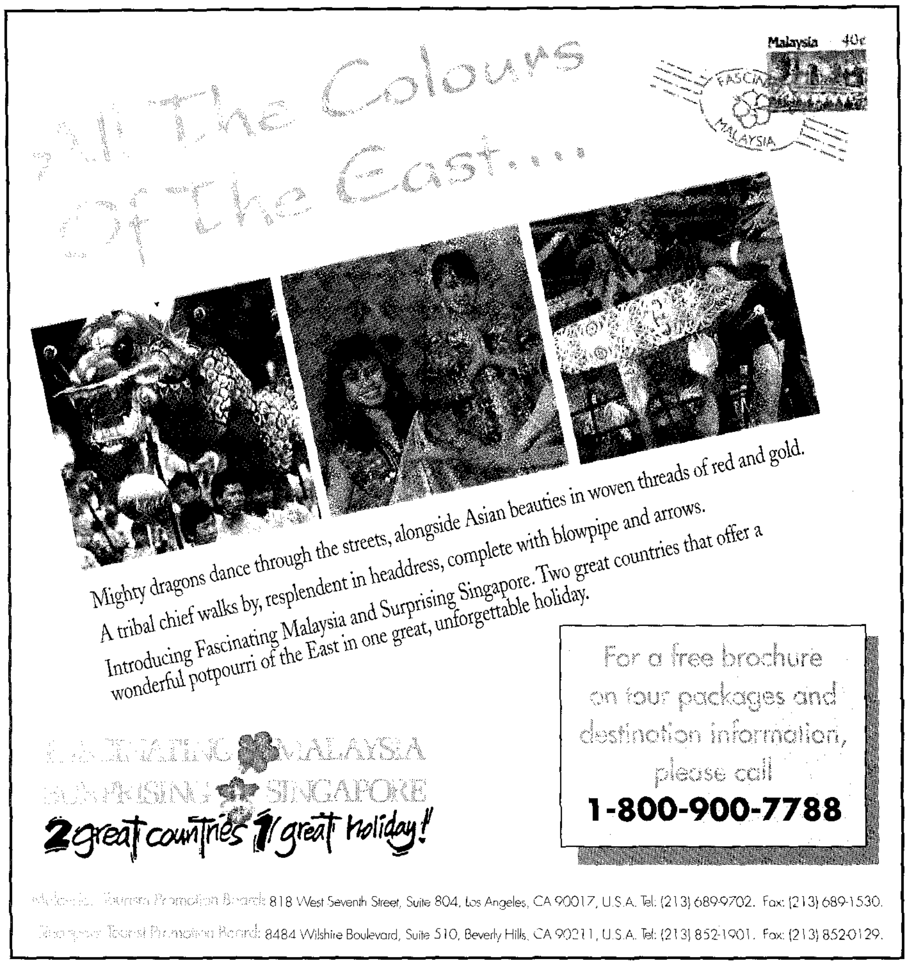
"The Radio City Christmas Spectacular"—This year's edition features a cast of ninety-three, including the Rockettes. (Sixth Ave. at 50th St. Through Jan. 8. For information about schedules and tickets, call 247-4777.)

"Babes in Toyland"—The Victor Herbert classic, presented by Theatreworks/USA. (Promenade Theatre, Broadway at 76th St. 677-5959. Nov. 19-20 and Nov. 27 at 12:30.)

Percussion Party—The Zairean drummer Kihonia will lead a workshop on drumming and communication, in conjunction with the Museum for African Art's "Artists and Ancestors" exhibit. For ages five and older. (593 Broadway. 966-1313, ext. 117. Nov. 19 at 1.)

Classical Medley—The Metropolitan Opera Guild's Growing Up with Opera series gets started on Nov. 19-20 at 11, 1, and 3. (Lincoln Center's Clark Studio Theatre, Rose Building, 165 W. 65th St. 769-7008.) . . . ¶ Highlights of a Little Orchestra Society "Lolli-Pops" concert include P. D. Q. Bach's "Echo Sonata for Two Unfriendly Groups of Instruments," Strauss's "Blue Danube Waltz," and Sousa's "Washington Post March." (Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. 355-6160. Nov. 19 at 10:30 and 11:45 and Nov. 20 at 12:30 and 1:45.) . . . ¶ The Metropolitan Museum's Children's Choice concert on Nov. 19 at 2:30 focusses on world music, with the David Amram quartet. (Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949.)

And Don't Forget—The Big Apple Circus at Lincoln Center's Damrosch Park, through Jan. 8 (268-0055).



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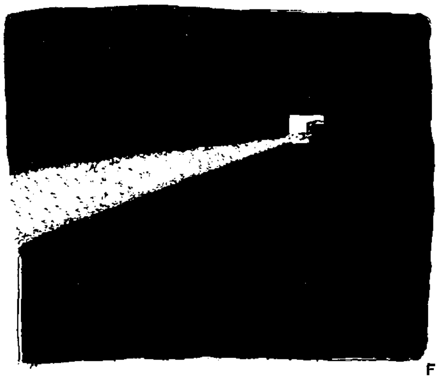

THE MOVIES

FILMS OPENING THIS WEEK

Heavenly Creatures—A movie from New Zealand, directed by Peter Jackson, and based on a sensational 1954 murder case involving two schoolgirls (Melanie Lynskey and Kate Winslet). Written by the director and Frances Walsh. (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.) Opening November 16. (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Miracle on 34th Street—Richard Attenborough and Mara Wilson as Kris Kringle and Susan Walker, the roles made famous by Edmund Gwenn and Natalie Wood. With Elizabeth Perkins and Dylan McDermott. George Seaton (the writer and director of the 1947 version) and John Hughes collaborated on the script, and Les Mayfield directed. Opening November 18. (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 34th St. East, Gotham Cinema, Chelsea Cinemas, and Lincoln Square.)

The Professional—In the first American film from French writer-director Luc Besson ("La Femme Nikita"), an orphaned twelve-year-old (Natalie Portman) takes shelter with a neighboring loner (Jean Reno) who turns out to be a hit man for the mob. With Gary Oldman as a corrupt D.E.A. agent, and Danny Aiello as the hit man's boss. Opening November 18. (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Village Theatre VII, Murray Hill Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Square, and Astor Plaza.)

Star Trek Generations—Captain Kirk (William Shatner) meets Captain Picard (Patrick Stewart, from "Star Trek: The Next Generation") in the Starship *Enterprise's* seventh trip to the box office. The screenplay is by Ron Moore and Brannon Braga. Directed by David Carson. Opening November 18. (Village Theatre VII, 34th Street Showplace, New York Twin, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Square, and Criterion Center.)

The Swan Princess—An animated version of the Swan Lake legend, directed by Richard Rich and featuring the voices of John Cleese, Jack Palance, Steven Wright, and Sandy Duncan, as well as eight new songs by Lex de Azevedo and David Zippel. Opening November 18. (Village East Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Cinema II, Orpheum VII, Lincoln Square, and Criterion Center.)

Terror 2000—German director Christoph Schlingensief's violent satire about neo-Nazis on the rampage. In German. Opening November 18. (Quad Cinema.)

To Live—This Chinese epic follows a husband and wife (Ge You and Gong Li) through the Civil War, the Great Leap Forward, the Cultural Revolution, and beyond. Directed by Zhang Yimou ("Ju Dou," "Raise the Red Lantern," and "The Story of Qiu Ju"). The screenplay, by Yu Hua and Lu Wei, is based on Yu Hua's novel. In Mandarin. Opening November 18. (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

CURRENT FILMS

(The signed notes are by Anthony Lane, Terrence Rafferty, and Michael Sragow. If a movie has been reviewed in The Current Cinema, the date of its review is given. Theatre addresses and phone numbers are listed on page 44.)

The Adventures of Priscilla Queen of the Desert—Paragons of camp become campers, of sorts, in this cult-pleasing tale of a transsexual (Terence Stamp) and two drag queens (Hugo Weaving and Guy Pearce) who take a lip-synching act from Sydney to a resort in arid central Australia. Stephan Elliott, the writer-director, has one original idea—posing creatures of the night in wild sunbaked settings. As crossover drag sagas go, it's neither as robustly funny as "La Cage aux Folles" nor as lively and poetic as the best parts of "Outrageous!"—M.S. (Village East Cinemas and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Anchoress—Christine Carpenter as a fourteenth-century Briton, fixated on the Virgin Mary and forced to choose between her mother, an accused witch, and the Church. Chris Newby directed. (Film Forum.)

Bullets Over Broadway—A nicely structured piece of silliness from Woody Allen, set in the theatre world of the nineteen-twenties. John Cusack is the Woody substitute, an earnest young playwright who needs to discover an existence beyond the stage; Chazz Palminteri steals the picture as the taciturn gangster who swaps places with him, becoming as ruthless in his aesthetics as he is with a gun. Around this neat switch Allen assembles a crowd of near-caricatures—opportunities for Dianne Wiest, Jim Broadbent, Jennifer Tilly, and others to show their stuff.—A.L. (10/24/94) (19th Street East 6, Cinema I, Orpheum VII, Art Greenwich Twin, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Clerks—Dogged, responsible Dante (Brian O'Halloran) does a slow burn over a long day at the Quick Stop cash register. His girlfriend Veronica (Marilyn Ghigliotti) shocks him with her record of casual fellatio; his buddy Randal (Jeff Anderson) shocks customers at the adjacent video store with casual insults. The humor of two clerks arguing about ethics and sex deflates before the halfway mark, but the writer-director, Kevin Smith, dishes up some funny profanity in his low-budget black-and-white début.—M.S. (Angelika Film Center and 68th St. Playhouse.)

Dingo—A famous jazz musician (Miles Davis) crash-lands in the Australian outback and befriends a boy who grows up to become a dingo trapper and part-time trumpet player. Colin Friels co-stars. Rolf de Heer's film was shot in 1990, the year before Davis died. Michel Legrand and Davis collaborated on the score. (Cinema Village.)

Double Dragon—A mystical martial-arts adventure set in post-apocalyptic Southern California, where a terrible earthquake has left anarchy and devastation in its wake. Robert Patrick is a sinister gang leader battling with the forces of good (represented by Julia Nickson, Scott Walsh, Mark Decascos, and Alyssa Milano). Directed by Jim Yukich. (86th Street East Twin, 23rd St. West Triplex, Olympia, and Criterion Center.)

Eat Drink Man Woman—Another film comedy from Ang Lee, the director of "The Wedding Banquet." The aging Mr. Chu (Sihung Lung) is a widowed chef, living in Taipei with his three daughters, each of whom is getting itchy for the world beyond. (Watch out for the exquisite Chien-Lien Wu as Jia-Chien, the pushiest of the three.) Mr. Chu is a King Lear of the kitchen: a master on his own ground, slapping fish around and blowing air into a boiled duck, but gradually losing his sense of taste and his power to rule. The movie is more likable than memorable; you come out running for the nearest restaurant. In Mandarin.—A.L. (Angelika Film Center and Plaza.)

L'Enfer—Claude Chabrol has returned to the sunny provincial horrors of "Le Boucher." Paul (François Cluzet) is a successful hotelier, who marries Nelly (Emmanuelle Béart)

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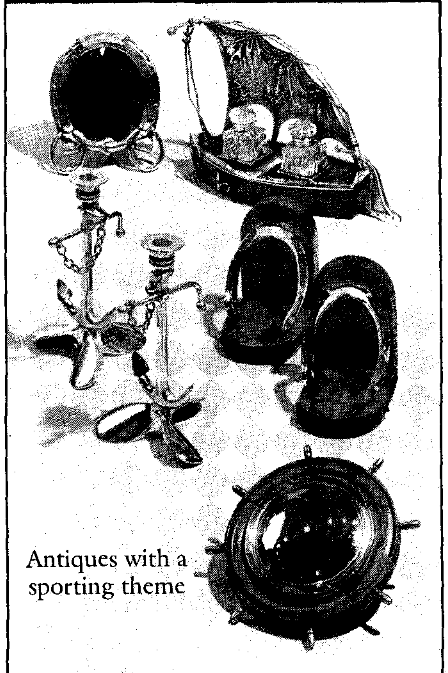

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CURRENT FILMS—Cont'd

and can't quite believe that she is faithful to him. Chabrol hauls us slowly through the stages of Paul's mad jealousy, from mild suspicion to a final, untethered hysteria. The weak link in the picture is Cluzet, who seems feeble and plaintive; you wouldn't blame Béart (whose beauty really is maddening) if she *did* start playing around. Chabrol adapted the story from an old screenplay by Henri-Georges Clouzot (the director of "Diabolique"), and added his own brand of casual foreboding. Who else could find such menace in the sound of jets crossing a peaceful summer sky? In French.—A.L. (Cinema 3rd Avenue.)

Floundering—James LeGros is unemployed, his brother is a drug addict, and his girlfriend is cheating on him in this black comedy about being down and out in Venice, California. Written and directed by Peter McCarthy. (Quad Cinema.)

Forrest Gump—As all the world now knows, Tom Hanks plays Forrest Gump, a simple Alabama soul who serves his country without hurting a fly; he saves his comrades in Vietnam, woos the dippy Jenny (Robin Wright), and runs back and forth across the continent. Hanks does his best to convince us that Gump is, in fact, a character, and not merely a bulging sack of virtues, but the movie takes the fight out of him. With Sally Field and Gary Sinise. Directed by Robert Zemeckis.—A.L. (7/25/94) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex and 59th Street East Cinema. . . . ¶ 34th St. East; through Nov. 17.)

Hoop Dreams—This engrossing documentary tells the stories of two inner-city Chicago teen-agers, William Gates and Arthur Agee, who aspire to careers in professional basketball. The filmmakers—Steve James, Frederick Marx, and Peter Gilbert—follow them all the way through high school. In the course of the movie's patient, sympathetic narrative (the running time is close to three hours), our reaction to the heroes' progress changes decisively, and for the better: at first we're assessing their chances, measuring them for N.B.A. uniforms; by the end we're rooting for them simply to survive the process without losing all their exuberance and drive and creative spirit.—T.R. (10/17/94) (Eastside Playhouse, Film Forum, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

I Don't Want to Talk About It—Luisina Brando plays a rich widow in a Latin-American village who refuses to acknowledge the vertically challenged condition of her dwarf daughter (Alejandra Podesta); Marcello Mastroianni is the dashing new man in town who improbably falls for and marries the girl. The erotic whimsy and small-town humor don't congeal, and the deus-ex-circus ending is an insult. It's a one-joke movie with a lousy punch line. Maria Luisa Bemberg directed. In Spanish.—M.S. (57th St. Playhouse.)

I Like It Like That—It's macha versus macho in the Bronx, as a young mother of three (Lauren Vélez) takes an assistant's job at a record company to bail her husband (Jon Seda) out of jail, only to rouse gossip and jealousy in the barrio. Darnell Martin's enjoyably brash début movie has originality and feeling beneath the look-at-me theatrics. It's about the comedy and pathos of people taking on more responsibility than they can handle; the best moments come when the characters (and Martin) catch their breath and crack some jokes. There's riotous sexual vaudeville provided by Vélez and Seda. With Jesse Borrego, Lisa Vidal, and Griffin Dunne.—M.S. (Village Theatre VII, 19th Street East 6, Manhattan Twin, Orpheum VII, and Carnegie Hall Cinemas.)

Interview with the Vampire—Director Neil Jordan's version of Anne Rice's novel, from her screenplay, with Tom Cruise as Lestat. Also with Brad Pitt, Stephen Rea, Antonio Banderas, Christian Slater, and Kirsten Dunst. (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.) (Village Theatre VII, 19th Street East 6, 34th Street Showplace, Tower East, Orpheum VII, Ziegfeld, and 84th Street Sixplex.)

The Last Seduction—A star turn from Linda Fiorentino as Bridget, a woman with a frozen wasteland where her moral landscape should be. In New York, she cheats her husband (Bill Pullman) out of their illegal earnings; upstate, she cheats Mike (Peter Berg) out of everything but his life. The movie has a hard forties snap to it—lust is a weapon and love is a letdown. Directed by John Dahl ("Red Rock West").—A.L. (10/24/94) (Village Theatre VII and Paris.)

The Lion King—Disney's new animated feature is a coming-of-age story about animal royalty. It's "Bambi," but with carnivores. The hero, a young lion named Simba, is born to the purple, but before he can ascend to the throne he has to make cute friends, court a soft-eyed female of the species, and see his father die (in a scene that may actually jerk kids' tears more shamelessly than its counterpart in "Bambi"). Between traumas, the movie serves up soothingly banal musical numbers (composed by Elton John and Tim Rice) and silly, rambunctious comedy. The animation, computer-assisted in some of the more elaborate sequences, is sometimes impressive, but rarely impressive enough to overcome a certain impersonality—a stubborn mechanical coldness. Directed by Roger Allers and Rob Minkoff.—T.R. (6/20/94) (Village East Cinemas, Sutton, 23rd St. West Triplex, Guild, and Lincoln Square; starting Nov. 18.)

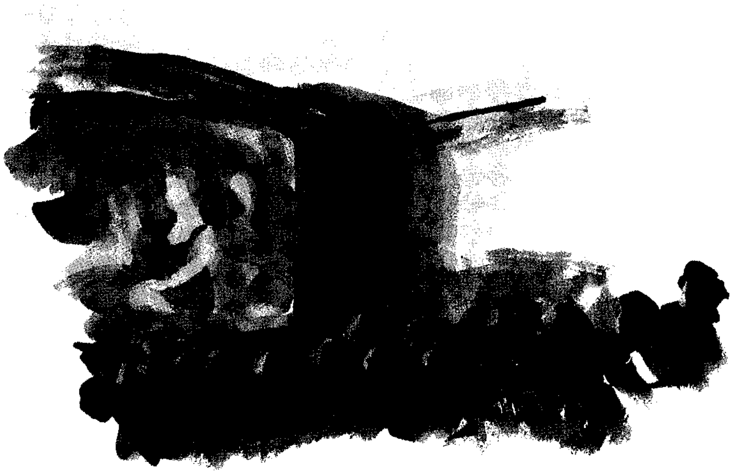
Love Affair—Glenn Gordon Caron's movie is the second remake of Leo McCarey's 1939 romantic weeper (same title), which starred Charles Boyer and Irene Dunne; in 1957, McCarey filmed it again, as "An Affair to Remember," with Cary Grant and Deborah Kerr. This was cheesy, contrived material in 1939 and in 1957, and it still is. Everyone involved in this picture seems overqualified, from the high-powered cast (headed by Warren Beatty and Annette Bening, this time) to the writers (Robert Towne, with Beatty) to the cinematographer (Conrad Hall) to the production designer (the late Ferdinando Scarfiotti). There's an air of slumming about the whole enterprise, which kind of undercuts the romantic mood.—T.R. (Village East Cinemas and Chelsea Cinemas. . . . ¶ New York Twin; through Nov. 17.)

Mary Shelley's Frankenstein—Kenneth Branagh as the young doctor with the big idea, Helena Bonham Carter as the love of his life, and Robert De Niro as the disgruntled creature who comes between them. Branagh, who also directed and co-produced, has transformed Shelley's cautionary tale into a restless farrago: schlock without horror. There are some potent sights here, like the bare-fleshed Frankenstein wrestling with his new creation, but the power is frittered away by a camera that refuses to calm down, and by performances that strain beyond earnestness without ever touching the heights of camp. (De Niro is more scarred than Boris Karloff, but also more sentimental.) The film won't let you have a good, messy time; it has more important things on its mind.—A.L. (11/14/94) (Village Theatre VII, 19th Street East 6, 34th Street Showplace, Gemini, Orpheum VII, 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

Manhattan by Numbers—Iranian director Amir Naderi's first English-language feature follows an unemployed journalist (John Wojda) as he wanders from Washington Heights to the Lower East Side in search of cash for his back rent. (Quad Cinema.)

Only You—Norman Jewison pulls together elements from "Roman Holiday," "Summertime," and "Cinderella," as well as his own "Moonstruck," and comes up with a negligible comedy about a jittery bride-to-be (Marisa Tomei) who jets from Pittsburgh to Italy in search of the true love prophesied by a Ouija board and a fortune-teller. Robert Downey, Jr., plays the American in Rome who may be her one and only. Diane Drake's script doesn't help an audience share Tomei's fantasy.—M.S. (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, First & 62nd Cinemas, and Criterion Center.)

Pontiac Moon—In July, 1969, as the Apollo 11 astronauts travel toward the first manned moon landing, a schoolteacher (Ted Danson) decides to take his young son (Ryan Todd)



on a cross-country race to reach Spires of the Moon National Park before the astronauts touch down. With Mary Steenburgen as Danson's agoraphobic wife. Directed by Peter Medak. (New York Twin.)

Pulp Fiction—In Quentin Tarantino's new picture, John Travolta, Samuel L. Jackson, Uma Thurman, Tim Roth, Harvey Keitel, Christopher Walken, and Bruce Willis parade through two and a half hours of complicated, cross-weaving Los Angeles plots, some of which are more gripping than others; the talk is dirty and funny, the violence always waiting just around the corner. It's a bright and startling picture, but the next day, it seems like a dream: the film attacks your senses and gives you almost nothing to remember it by, let alone to nourish you. It had to happen, and Tarantino is the man to deliver it: cinema as fast food.—A.L. (10/10/94) (Angelika Film Center, Murray Hill Cinemas, Beekman, East 85th Street, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy.)

Quiz Show—Robert Redford's movie is a speedy, absorbing chronicle of a trivial show-business scandal of the fifties: the rigging of big-money quiz shows. The screenplay, by Paul Attanasio, tries hard to sell some sweeping ideas about the class dynamics of American society, and doesn't quite succeed. The picture's real strength is its witty, vigorous evocation of the fifties media world. It hums along like a well-constructed farce, and its crazy momentum carries it over the bumps of social significance. Ralph Fiennes, John Turturro, and Rob Morrow have the largest roles, but they're outshone by the supporting players: Paul Scofield, Mira Sorvino, Christopher McDonald, Allan Rich, Hank Azaria, Barry Levinson, and—best of all—David Paymer.—T.R. (9/19/94) (Quad Cinema, 23rd St. West Triplex, and Columbus Circle. . . . ¶ Cinema II and Guild; through Nov. 17.)

The River Wild—A family led by plucky supermom Meryl Streep goes on a white-water-rafting vacation out West and gets a hairier trip than it bargained for when the raft is hijacked by a pair of desperate crooks. The audience, however, gets precisely what *it* bargained for: safe, predictable thrills, with a light spray of dysfunctional-family drama. Curtis Hanson's direction is expert, but the screenplay, by Denis O'Neill, is so formulaic that the picture is never more than moderately exciting; you can see around every bend in this river. Also with Kevin Bacon, David Strathairn, Joseph Mazzello, and John C. Reilly.—T.R. (First & 62nd Cinemas, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, and Metro Cinema.)

The Road to Wellville—A farce about American health mania at the turn of the century, set in and around the Battle Creek, Michigan, spa of Dr. John Harvey Kellogg (Anthony Hopkins). The writer-director, Alan Parker, displays comic zeal only in his handling of the set design and props, such as Kellogg's enema apparatus. Hopkins, with buck teeth and facial fur, resembles a rabid beaver and chews the screen accordingly. Matthew Broderick, as a patient, parades around in regulation loincloths that give him the look of a New Year's cherub; he regains his aplomb when he renounces the spa and dons civilian clothes for good. The beleaguered cast also includes John Cusack, Dana Carvey, Lara Flynn Boyle, and Bridget Fonda (as Broderick's wife). Based on the novel by T. Coraghessan Boyle.—M.S. (Village Theatre VII, Murray Hill Cinemas, Baronet, Chelsea Cinemas, and 62nd & Broadway.)

Robert A. Heinlein's The Puppet Masters—Donald Sutherland stars as a desperate scientist in this thriller, based on Heinlein's science-fiction novel, about alien parasites who control the minds of their human hosts. Directed by Stuart Orme. (Village East Cinemas and 23rd St. West Triplex. . . . ¶ Gotham Cinema; through Nov. 17.)

The Santa Clause—After Santa suffers a workplace accident, a divorced father (Tim Allen, of the TV sitcom "Home Improvement") has to prove himself to his son by stepping into the sleigh and delivering the presents himself. He has second thoughts when he finds his body shaking like a bowlful of jelly. Leo Benvenuti and Steve Rudnick wrote the script, and John Pasquin directed. (Village East Cinemas, Murray Hill Cinemas, Sutton, 86th Street East Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy 1.)

The Shawshank Redemption—Tim Robbins returns to his best form with his haunted, cunning portrayal of Andy Dufresne, a young banker sentenced to life imprisonment in the nineteen-forties. Frank Darabont's movie never grabs at you, preferring to work patiently on your sympathies and nerves while finding time for casual jokes. What at first seems like a plotless tale of companionship—principally between Andy and a fixer named Red (Morgan Freeman)—tightens into excitement. The picture stays on track and leaves you, appropriately enough, with a surging sense of release.—A.L. (9/26/94) (First & 62nd Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, Metro Cinema, and National Twin.)

Silent Fall—A nine-year-old autistic boy who witnesses the murder of his parents is treated as a savant superhero in this tasteless, slipshod thriller, written by Akiva Goldsman and directed by Bruce Beresford. After rival psychologists Richard Dreyfuss and John Lithgow prod the child to recover his memory of the event, he reveals not just total recall, but also the power of note-perfect mimicry. The movie is supposed to hinge on the duelling therapies of humane, non-toxic Dreyfuss and imperious, prescription-happy Lithgow, but it turns out to be the story of a cryptic superboy and his nubile, overprotective sister (Liv Tyler). Maybe Goldsman's bent for juvenile heroics will prove more apt in his next script, "Batman Forever." With Linda Hamilton.—M.S. (First & 62nd Cinemas.)

The Specialist—Cheesecake meets beefcake as Sharon Stone persuades an ex-C.I.A. explosives ace (Sylvester Stallone) to wreak vengeance on Miami mobsters. Stallone's archenemy (James Woods, of course) heads security

KATE SHEPHERD

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CURRENT FILMS—Cont'd

for these Cuban bad guys (led by Eric Roberts and Rod Steiger). The screenwriter, Alexandra Seros, gives every character a wit impediment. Steiger's accent prompts nervous laughter: "You bastard!" comes out "Jew bastard!" Luis Llosa directed.—M.S. (Village East Cinemas, Manhattan Twin, Orpheum VII, Olympia, and Criterion Center.)

StarGate—Elementary sci-fi about a hieroglyphics expert (James Spader) and a U.S. military squad (led by Kurt Russell) who zip to a distant planet via the title portal, last used in ancient Egypt. They discover that Ra (Jaye Davidson), the sun god of the Pharaohs, is alive and well and a vicious alien. The intended audience seems to be ten-year-olds, who'll be dazed by the props and designs; Davidson is like a camp Disney witch. Directed by Roland Emmerich from a script by Emmerich and Dean Devlin.—M.S. (34th Street Showplace, First & 62nd Cinemas, Orpheum VII, Waverly, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

An Unforgettable Summer—Lucian Pintilie's new movie—his first since the triumph of "The Oak," in 1993, and just as weird—is set in southeastern Romania in 1925. An army captain (Claudiu Bleont) and his loving wife (Kristin Scott-Thomas) have been exiled to a barren, beautiful outpost, where they survive on limp salads and live in fear of brigands. It's hard to tell who is more difficult and determined: Scott-Thomas, who belies her frail features and lace dresses with a startling portrait of a troublemaker, or Pintilie himself, who marks out the plot in a series of clearly lit, unnerving scenes. Too much of a surrealist for political satire, too earthy to be a dreamer, he sneaks past your defenses like the young Taviani brothers and explodes his images in style. In Romanian.—A.L. (11/14/94) (Quad Cinema and Cinema 3.)

Kristin Scott-Thomas and Claudiu Bleont in "An Unforgettable Summer."

LILLIAN ALLEN

Vanya on 42nd Street—Louis Malle's astonishingly beautiful film documents a stage production, directed by André Gregory, of Chekhov's "Uncle Vanya." The conceit is that the actors—wearing street clothes and clutching takeout coffee—have gathered for a run-through; as it goes along, our sense of the theatrical reality gives way to the more intimate feeling of belief that movies create. The style of the movie seems, finally, to merge with the play itself: nothing appears to be happening, yet everything is transformed. With Wallace Shawn, as Vanya and Julianne Moore, as Yelena; also with Brooke Smith, Larry Pines, and George Gaynes. The superb adaptation is by David Mamet.—T.R. (10/31/94) (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

The War—Rural Mississippi, circa 1970. Dad (Kevin Costner), a traumatized Vietnam vet, is having a tough time staying employed and communicating with Mom (Mare Winningham). Their daughter (Lexi Randall) and son (Elijah Wood) build a tree house and wage turf wars against a family of bullies. It's hard to know what's worse, the trumped-up collisions or the drawling rhetoric of healing that follows them. ("I think the only thing that truly keeps people safe and happy is love. And in the absence of love, there's nothing in this world worth fightin' for.") Kathy McWorter wrote the script; Jon Avnet directed.—M.S. (Coronet, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Regency, and National Twin.)

THEATRE ADDRESSES

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EAST SIDE

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000).
Little Theatre, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171).
Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th (477-6600).
Village Theatre VII, 3rd Ave. at 11th (982-0400).
Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th (924-3363).
Village East Cinemas, 2nd Ave. at 12th (529-6799).
19th Street East 6, B'way at 19th (260-8000).
Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th (689-6548).
34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th (532-5544).
34th St. East, 241 E. 34th (683-0255).
Eastside Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 55th (755-3020).
Sutton 1 and 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th (759-1411).
Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th (759-2262).
Plaza, 42 E. 58th (355-3320).
Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th (935-6420).
59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th (759-4630).
Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th (355-1663).
Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th (753-6022).
First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd (513-5408).
Gemini 1 and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th (832-1670).
Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th (737-2622).
New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th (744-7339).
68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th (734-0302).
Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st (879-1313).
East 85th Street, 1st Ave. at 85th (249-5100).
Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th (534-1880).
Orpheum VII, 3rd Ave. at 86th (876-2400).
86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th (249-1144).

WEST SIDE

Film Forum, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110).
Waverly 1 and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd (929-8037).
Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th (929-3350).
Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th (255-8800).
Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd (513-5402).
23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd (989-0060).
Guild, 33 W. 50th (757-2406).
Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583).
Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th (765-7600).
57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th (581-7360).
Carnegie Hall Cinemas, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th (265-2520).
Angelika 57, 225 W. 57th (586-1900).
Paris, 4 W. 58th (980-5656).
Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th (752-5959).
Columbus Circle, B'way at 61st (247-5070).
62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd (265-7466).
Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, B'way at 63rd (757-2280).
Regency, B'way at 67th (724-3700).
Lincoln Square, B'way at 68th (336-5000)
84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th (877-3600).
Metro Cinema 1 and 2, B'way at 99th (222-1200).
Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th (865-8128).

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th (354-0900).
Embassy 1, B'way at 46th (302-0494).
Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th (730-7262).
Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way (869-8340).
National Twin, B'way at 44th (869-0950).

REVIVALS

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael and Michael Sragow. Theatre addresses and phone numbers appear with the film-library listings following these notes.)

Alien (1979)—The title creature grows from a gross oblong egg to what looks like a wart with tentacles, and then into a swift, snaky devil; a handful of space workers battle the thing as they offer each other such sound advice as "Be careful!" Ridley Scott, the director, fills the screen with shadows and vapors that serve as a smoke screen for the vapid, humorless plot. (The script is credited to Dan O'Bannon.) Because the movie is all squeamish anticipation, an audience has nothing to do but wait for the jolts, so they're never quite jolting enough. The talented, straitjacketed cast includes John Hurt, Ian Holm, Veronica Cartwright, Yaphet Kotto, Harry Dean Stanton, Tom Skerritt, and, of course, Sigourney Weaver.—M.S. (American Museum of the Moving Image; Nov. 19.)

The Decline of the American Empire (1986)—The French-Canadian writer-director Denys Arcand takes on the subject of sex in a period of social change, without the binding ties of family and religion or strong commitment to the future—sex in a period when the eight principal characters (aging middle-class intellectuals connected with the History Department of a Montreal university) no longer believe in postponing pleasure. On this Friday afternoon in autumn, the women, who need to keep in shape in order to appeal to men, work out together at a gym in the city while the men, gathered at a lakeside cottage, prepare trout coulibiac for a festive dinner. Both groups talk about sex, and when they're together in the long evening they go on talking about sex, but more discreetly—with less bawdiness and bravura. Arcand slips in flashbacks without breaking the flow of talk or jostling the ravishing natural changes in the light at the lake. There's nothing weighty in his approach; it's a lovely, very unassuming picture, yet there is enough drama so that by the end a subtle shift in all the relationships is necessary. The film is structured like a concerto for nine instruments. (A ninth character, an outsider, joins the group at the dinner table.) In French.—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; Nov. 19.)

An Englishman Abroad (1983)—The actress Coral Browne was on tour in Moscow when the

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PROJECTIONS

Ruling the Airwaves

As “Stonewall,” a BBC Productions feature film about the 1969 riots, continues shooting in the Village, the Public Theatre is opening a monthlong tribute to some of the British Broadcasting Corporation’s earlier work. “Against the *Odds: BBC Drama 1975-1994*” includes thirteen features and four serials, and Sunday-night soothing they are not. Even in the 1992 adaptation of Muriel Spark’s “Memento Mori” (November 21-23), a brief and spiky whodunit with a cast so dottily ancient that Maggie Smith is the spring chicken among them, plenty of tea gets spilt. The 1992 “The Lost Language of Cranes” (November 18-20), which was put together by Nigel Finch, the director of “Stonewall,” will be shown in its gamy uncut version. By the time the Public’s program winds up, with Roger Mitchell’s suitably stoned 1993 version of Hanif Kureishi’s punk-and-spunk novel “The Buddha of Suburbia” (December 9-27), network standards will have gotten quite a goosing.

But the series tracks more than just loosening censorship. It also shows actors at work before they awoke and found themselves famous. In the 1992 movie “The Cormorant” (December 2-4), Ralph Fiennes inaugurates the gallery of perverse, educated types that culminated in his “Quiz Show” turn; watching him sprint down a Welsh beach, tethered to a menacing kitelike bird, you can sense the explorer’s blood that pumps through the Fiennes family veins. Daniel Day-Lewis lives up to his family’s literary legacy playing a brilliantined, bow-tied Franz Kafka in Alan Bennett’s 1985 teleplay “The Insurance Man” (November 18-20). “They say you’re a human being,” an imploring claimant tells him. “No,” replies Day-Lewis, “I do a very good imitation of a human being.”

Early behind-the-camera talent glimmers forth here, too, especially in Stephen Frears’ 1975 pictures “Song of Experience” and “Three Men in a Boat” (November 18-23), and in Antonia Bird’s gritty, unrelenting “Safe” (December 2-4 and 6-8). Though “Safe,” which is about two homeless West End kids, was seen in Britain only this year, Bird has already completed another teen-angst tale, “Mad Love,” for Touchstone. And “Priest,” one of her earlier projects for the BBC, will come to American screens this spring. The director and her cassocked actor, Linus Roache, are probably the next Brits in line for the American A-list.

— Brendan Lemon

REVIVALS—Cont’d

notorious defector Guy Burgess drunkenly stumbled backstage; this hour-long BBC movie, starring Browne and Alan Bates, turns the incident into a brilliant social comedy. Alan Bennett, the writer, gives Burgess (Bates) such superbly droll expressions of British *cultivation as “Not strong on irony, the comrades.”* Browne and Bates have an alternately prickly and cozy rapport, and the movie, deftly directed by John Schlesinger, is filled with comic coups—for instance, a Gilbert and Sullivan tune strummed on a balalaika.—M.S. (Little Theatre; Nov. 18-20.)

National Lampoon’s Animal House (1979)—This scattershot, oddly innocuous spoof of early-sixties college life set the pattern for big-screen slob comedies. It pits the good guys (nerds struggling out of nerddom, proud slovens, make-out kings) against the bad guys (student-government hustlers, R.O.T.C. enthusiasts, uptight cheerleaders). At the time, a *Rolling Stone* reporter actually described the film as a message from the antiwar generation to the careerist generation of the late seventies: “Go out and trash something, people, or you won’t have anything to remember at your five-year reunion.” With John Belushi crushing beer cans against his skull, Tom Hulce envisioning the universe fitting on his fingernail, and Tim Matheson as a hopeful young stud. John Landis directed, from the script by Harold Ramis, Doug Kenney, and Chris Miller.—M.S. (American Museum of the Moving Image; Nov. 20.)

A Question of Attribution (1991)—The director John Schlesinger and the writer Alan Bennett followed up “An Englishman Abroad” with this seventy-minute BBC film involving the English art expert and double agent Anthony Blunt (James Fox), an M15 investigator named Chubb (David Calder), and the Queen herself (Prunella Scales). It’s bracing fun that balloons in the mind—a crafty and imaginative comedy of doublespeak and second sight, public faces and private lives, current events and history. Chubb interrogates Blunt while Blunt analyzes a painting once wrongly attributed to Titian; art, Blunt asserts, “will always elude exposition.” So will artistic personalities. At the film’s peak, Her Majesty bumps into Blunt in Buckingham Palace: Scales wins laughs with her imposing yet vigorous air, and Fox is delightfully impervious.—M.S. (Little Theatre; Nov. 18-20.)

Sweet Smell of Success (1957)—For several years, Tony Curtis had been a virtual guarantor of box-office success, and the New York locations for this film were invaded by thousands of teen-agers, who broke through police barricades to get to their idol. But these throngs ignored the completed picture, in which Curtis grew up into an actor and gave what will probably be remembered as the best performance of his career. Even the presence of that other box-office guarantor, Burt Lancaster, did not lift the picture from the red ink. This is understandable, because the movie is a slice of perversity—a study of dollar and power worship, with Lancaster as a Broadway gossip columnist and Curtis as an ingratiating, blackmailing press agent. Clifford Odets never came through more pungently as a screenwriter; his distinctively idiomatic dialogue generally seems like bad poetry when it’s spoken from the screen, but here it’s harshly expressive and taut. The director, Alexander Mackendrick, has a crisp film-noir style: the production is shaped by a zest for the corrupt milieu, the pulsating big-city life (what used to be called “the symphony of a city”)—the streets, the night clubs, the cynical types, the noise and desperation. The film has body and flavor; even Tony Curtis’s name (Sidney Falco) stays with one—that, and the inflection he gives to “avidly.” Script by Odets and Ernest Lehman, from a short story by Lehman.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; starting Nov. 18.)

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Angelika 57, 225 W. 57th St. (586-1900)—Through Nov. 22: The 11th Annual Israel Film Festival.

Film Forum 2, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)—Through Nov. 17: “Dr. Strangelove, or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb” (1964, Stanley Kubrick). . . . ¶ From Nov. 18: “Sweet Smell of Success” (†).

Little Theatre, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-1717)—Through Nov. 17: A program of new Italian films. . . . From Nov. 18: “Against the Odds: BBC Drama 1975-1994.”

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—Nov. 17-20: A program of films directed by, or about, Jean Renoir. . . . ¶ A program of films by Denys Arcand. Nov. 18 at 2:30 and Nov. 22 at 6: “The Damned Loot” (1971). . . . Nov. 18 at 6: “Réjeanne Padovani” (1972). . . . Nov. 18 at 8:15: “Gina” (1974). . . . Nov. 19 at 2: “The Decline of the American Empire” (†). . . . Nov. 19 at 5 and Nov. 22 at 2:30: “Cotton Mill: Treadmill” (1969). . . . Nov. 20 at 2 and Nov. 21 at 6: “The Crime of Ovide Plouffe” (1984). . . . Nov. 20 at 5 and Nov. 21 at 2:30: “Love and Human Remains” (1993).

Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level. (875-5600)—Through Nov. 30: A program of films from Germany, 1933-45. . . . ¶ Nov. 19-20 at 2: “Kidnapped” (1960, Robert Stevenson).

Whitney Museum, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-0537)—A program of films and videos by, or about, black American males. Nov. 16 at noon: “Mingus” (1967, Thomas Reichman) and “Midnight Ramble: Oscar Micheaux and Race Movies” (1993). . . . Nov. 16 at 3:30: “In Search of Our Fathers” (1992, Marco Williams). . . . Nov. 17 at 2: “Surviving the Odds: To Be a Young Black Man in America” (1994). . . . Nov. 17 at 5:30: “After Winter: Sterling Brown” (1985, Haile Gerima) and “In Motion: Amiri Baraka” (1982, St. Clair Bourne). . . . Nov. 18 at noon: “Miles of Smiles, Years of Struggle” (1983) and “Eyes on the Prize, Part II: The Time Has Come, 1964-66” (1990). . . . Nov. 18 at 3:30: “Passing Through” (1977, Larry Clark). . . . Nov. 19 at noon: “Dutchman” (1967, Anthony Harvey) and “The Session” (1990, David Johnson). . . . Nov. 19 at 3:30 and Nov. 20 at noon: “Leadbelly” (1976, Gordon Parks). . . . Nov. 20 at 3: “Jack Johnson” (1970, Jim Jacobs) and “Eyes on the Prize, Part II: Ain’t Gonna Shuffle No More, 1964-72” (1990).

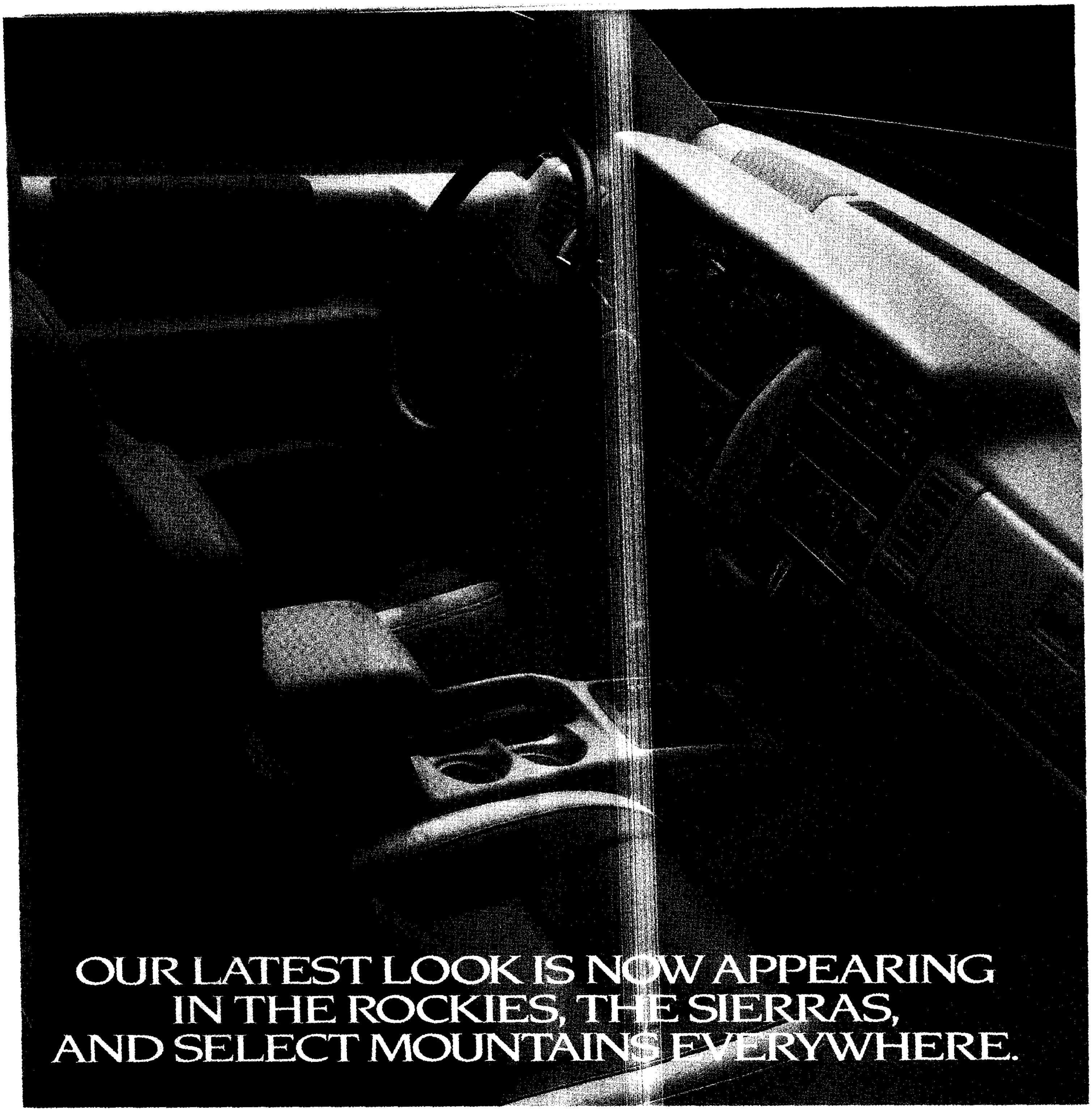
A Different Light Bookstore, 151 W. 19th St. (989-4850)—A Sunday-night series of free films (and popcorn). On Nov. 20 at 7, the feature will be “Torch Song” (1953, Charles Walters), with Joan Crawford.

Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—Nov. 22 at 12:30 3:15, 6, and 8:45: “The Pearls of the Crown” (1937, Sacha Guitry; in French, Italian, and English).

Symphony Space, B’way at 95th St. (864-5400)—Nov. 22 at 7: “Elevator to the Gallows” (“Frantic”; 1957, Louis Malle; in French). . . . Nov. 22 at 8:45: “Daybreak” (“Le Jour Se Lève”; 1939, Marcel Carné; in French).

American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria. (1-718 784-0077)—Nov. 19 at 2: “The Birds” (1963, Alfred Hitchcock). . . . Nov. 19 at 5: “Alien” (†). . . . Nov. 20 at 2: “M*A*S*H” (1970, Robert Altman). . . . Nov. 20 at 5: “National Lampoon’s Animal House” (†).

Brooklyn Museum, 200 Eastern Parkway. (1-718 638-5000)—“Reel-to-Reel Harmony: Great Classical Voices on Film,” the Museum’s festival of films that feature operatic luminaries, continues with programs that focus on African-American singers. Nov. 19 at 2: Clips of Marian Anderson, Leontyne Price, and Shirley Verrett, from the fifties and sixties. . . . ¶ Nov. 20 at 2: Spirituals from Ms. Anderson; operatic scenes with Grace Bumbry (“Carmen”) and Ms. Price (“Dialogues of the Carmelites” and “The Magic Flute”).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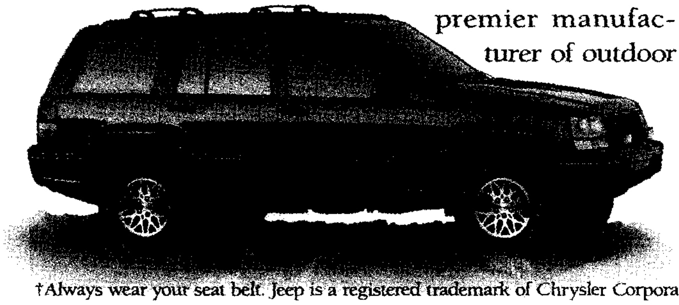

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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

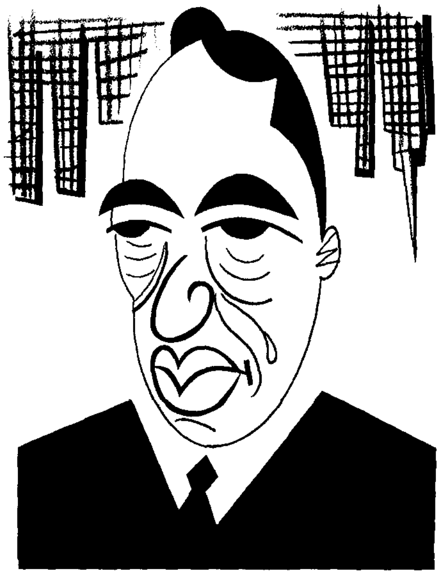
ONE SURE THING

A FEW hours before the State of New York would render him jobless, Mario Cuomo met his confessor at the St. Francis of Assisi Church, in midtown. Of course neither Cuomo nor the priest could reveal the content of their talk, but the Governor did admit to reporters that in a prayer he had asked his God not for victory from the voters, necessarily, but, rather, for the wisdom to understand their choice. The Governor may not be blamed if even now, days after his loss to George Pataki, he has trouble reading the mind of the state's majority. The promise to that majority that the new governor will be able to fulfill most easily is his popular vow to use state funds for the execution of human beings. "Whaddya think it will be?" one campaign worker said at Cuomo headquarters last Tuesday night. "Lethal injections or Old Sparky?"

For his twelve years as governor, Cuomo has alternately charmed and mystified his voters and listeners, so passionate is his mind, so curious have been his career decisions. But it may be best to leave Cuomo's choices—his refusal of a seat on the Supreme Court, his hesitation before the Presidential race of 1992—to him and his confessor. The better part of his legacy rests on a refusal of a more complicated kind. "I don't want to fool you," Cuomo said in 1982, during his first campaign for governor. "If the electric chair is what you want more than anything else, vote for someone else."

Since then, the rate of violent crime in New York has risen eleven per cent—alarming, except when compared with the national increase, of thirty-six per cent. In fact, in the past three years violent crime in New York has dropped. To deal with the epidemic of crack cocaine and its attendant mayhem, Cuomo built twenty-seven new prisons—not exactly a recipe for popularity on the left wing of the Democratic Party—and yet Pataki still blamed Cuomo, in one television ad, for the murder of a twenty-nine-year-old disabled man.

In his speeches, diaries, and interviews over the years, Cuomo did not hesitate to mention his engagement with the theology of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin or with the written work of Jefferson and Lincoln. For some, Cuomo's intellectual and moral searchings had a whiff of élitism; others found him full of wind and vanity. But on an issue that is so crucial to a society's moral self-definition Cuomo never showed a moment's hesitation or a glimmering of hypocrisy. He faced the most difficult of questions—capital punishment—and gave his answer. His simple "No" was the height of his eloquence. Now the question seems different: Lethal injection or the electric chair? The State of New York has moved on.



ILLUSTRATIONS BY ROBERT RISKO

STAGES OF GRIEF

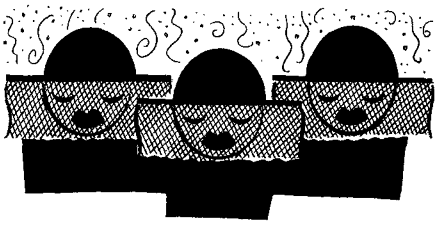
ON Election Night, Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, the psychiatrist who studies death and dying, was not at the Cuomo-campaign outpost in the Imperial Ballroom at the Sheraton New York on Seventh Avenue, but she would have had a good time if she had been. That way, she would have been able to observe a few hundred Cuomo staffers and campaign aides working their way through what Kübler-Ross has defined as the five stages of grief. The process was speedy. Stage 1—Denial—had passed early in the evening, because the voting patterns made the inevitable undeniable by about ten o'clock. Then came Stage 2: Anger. "Mostly we were angry to lose to such a *nobody*," one staff person said. "I mean, if we had lost to a *somebody*, like Ollie North, or one of the Bush boys, or even a weirdo like Huffington, it would have been different." Bargaining—that's Stage 3, when you make a pact with some higher power to be really good if only you can postpone this awful destiny—never took place, since no one on Cuomo's staff dared mention Al D'Amato's name.

Next came Depression. As the Governor conceded, many staffers were seen sobbing, and the ballroom started to empty. Acceptance—the final stage—arrived at about 1 A.M., at Rosie O'Grady's, a bar across the street, where about forty of the thirty-eight hundred or so Cuomo appointees who will probably be decommissioned gathered to have a drink. By then, the dismal results for Democrats across the country had been absorbed, making the experience seem less like tragedy and more like fate. At 3:30 A.M., the last of the mourners left O'Grady's and began drifting up to Albany, to see if Kinko's had a résumé service that stayed open all night.

THE HOME FRONT

THE Albany war widows got together on Election Night to celebrate the end of the long campaign. Their husbands, Albany bureau chiefs and reporters for major New York City newspapers, were downstate, writing the big story. All New York State was undergoing a siege mentality, but not the war widows, who would soon have their husbands back to take care of the children in the mornings before work.

The war widows—a former banker formerly of New Jersey, a freelance accountant formerly of Atlanta, and a freelance writer formerly of New York City—were having a light dinner at the accountant's, with all their children in tow: three toddlers and a preschooler. A babysitter also attended, to pick up stray macaroni and wipe down the furniture. On this warm Election Night—warm for Albany—with dogs barking in the back yard and a television on in the next room, the war widows drank wine and seltzer and bemoaned the many changes they were seeing in these United States.



"Kermit just isn't featured enough anymore," said the former banker.

"Yes, but Elmo has replaced him, and we love Elmo," said the freelance writer.

"I also love the Count," said the accountant. "People don't give him enough consideration."

"I wonder what's happening with the election," said the writer. The kids had commandeered the television from the get-go and were watching a "Barney" video.

Barney reminded the war widows of Pataki—and they sat and pondered Cuomo's fate briefly. Losing the Governor would be like losing a family dog that bites; they wondered about the future of the Cuomo family dog and her controversial weewee pads. They switched the video from "Barney" to "Snow White."

"Why do Disney's female characters have big breasts?" the writer asked the babysitter. "How come the Little Mermaid's hair stays dry even underwater?"

"Because she is special," the preschooler responded, unbidden.

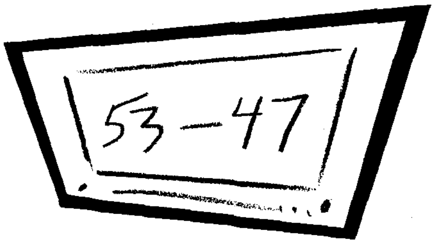
Of course, dinner ended before the election was won or lost. Station wagons were driven home by moms, just like in the nineteen-fifties. Children were put to bed. The nation's fate was decided. The state, at least, was not in a maternal, nurturing mood.

THE NUMBERS GAME

THE number began spreading across Austin around noon, when it was released into the political atmosphere by Karl Rove, a political consultant to George W. Bush. The number was 53–47, and, seven hours before the polls closed, it heralded the end of Ann Richards' term, and of the New Texas she had promised to create four years back. If you had the number, it could be used as a measure of your power, of your understanding of the world and your place in it.

By midafternoon, the women in bluejeans and faded Ann Richards T-shirts, the ones who had coaxed and often willed Richards through this last campaign, were just going through the motions of setting up a victory party at the Hyatt. You knew they had the number. At the Bush party site, in the Marriott, the young men in snappy suits and impeccably polished shoes were bounding across the lobby like puppy dogs finally off the leash. You knew they had the number, too. Journalists began composing their leads, about anti-Democratic sentiment, about the Christian right, about the victory of suburbanization—about all those things that, more and more, make Texas just like everyplace else. The reporters, of course, had the number.

George Shipley—a.k.a. Dr. Dirt—the rotund, baby-faced consultant to the Richards campaign, arrived at his own Election Night party looking like a boy who knew he was about to be punished. At around eight-twenty, George Cisneros, the artist/politico/composer, who was a guest at the party, quoted a new number, 52–48, which had come from his brother Henry, the HUD Secretary. "Those are D.N.C. numbers," Cisneros said, using shorthand, because, of course, everyone in the room knew that Richards had lost and that D.N.C. meant Democratic National Committee. The polls had been closed for little more than an hour, but people who had the number were already scripting Richards' future at the D.N.C. or on corporate boards.



By ten o'clock, when Richards finally gave her concession speech at the Hyatt, her traditionally emotional supporters were dry-eyed and composed. They'd had the number, so they did not look shell-shocked when her glorious New Texas went down in defeat. Only Richards' willowy daughter Cecile, clutching one of her children, was red-eyed and haunted, because a daughter, particularly one who had worked so hard in her mother's campaigns, could never believe such a number.

The Marriott ballroom cleared out fairly quickly after Bush's victory speech. People had other, more exclusive parties to go to, and Bush had already left. But Karl Rove could not get out of the ballroom. You had to recognize him to congratulate him; you had to know that he was the man who had had the number first. When someone asked him what the final number would be, he thought for a minute. "Bush is gonna be fifty-two or fifty-three, and she's gonna be forty-seven or forty-six," he said with a grin. "I'm gonna win this pool, I think."

ELECT CUOMO
RICHARDS
PATAKI
VOTE BUSH
VOTE BUSH
VOTE BUSH

NORTH GOES SOUTH

GIVE Oliver North his due as the underrated prose stylist he is. One of his favorite genres is the soldier's farewell—specifically, the unctuous promise to depart gracefully when he obviously plans to do no such thing. He gave one last week after losing his captious Senate race in Virginia to Charles Robb. Another example comes from North's famous PROF notes—this one a message to his boss, John Poindexter, who was then President Reagan's national-security adviser, on July 15, 1986. "I can understand why you may well have reservations about both my involvement in Nicaragua policy and even my continued tenure here," North E-mailed. "Since returning a few minutes ago I have been told that even my luncheon engagement with my sister yesterday is in question. Under these circumstances, and given your intention that I extricate myself entirely from the Nicaragua issue, it probably wd be best if I were to move on as quietly, but expeditiously as possible. I want you to know that it is, for me deeply disappointing to have lost your confidence, for I respect you, what you have tried to do and have enjoyed working with you on a number of issues important to our nation." As North knew would happen, Poindexter talked him down. "Now you are getting emotional again," Poindexter wrote back. "I just wanted to lower your visibility so you wouldn't be such a good target for the Libs." In other words, what was true then is true now: Oliver North will be back.

WINNER AND LOSER

BY ten-thirty, it had become clear that Massachusetts, the only state to go for George McGovern in 1972, was defying the nation again. As Democratic icons fell around Edward Kennedy, an overflow crowd stamped the floor of the Boston Park Plaza Hotel Imperial Ballroom and chanted "Ted! Ted! Ted!" The event had a wishful, retro feel, with a stray "Kennedy '80" button affixed to a lapel, and Joe Faherty, president of the Massachusetts A.F.L.-C.I.O., offering the crowd a thumbs-up. Shortly after Boston's Mayor Tom Menino made the inevitable George Foreman analogy, Kennedy, looking only slightly less puffy than Foreman, appeared. Tonight, there was no reprise of his 1980 Democratic Convention "The cause endures, the hope still lives, and the dream shall never die" speech. Kennedy offered little explanation for his counterintuitive victory, only repeated gratitude to his family and a quixotic thanks to Bill and Hillary Clinton for their help.

Down the hall, another liberal candidate was speaking. A small banquet room served as Election Night headquarters for Mark Roosevelt, the Democratic gubernatorial candidate, and for Bob Massie, an Ivy League-educated, cherubic-faced Episcopal minister, whose bid for lieutenant governor gained him notoriety as the first H.I.V.-positive American to try for statewide office. The hemophiliac son of the author Robert K. Massie, who wrote "Nicholas and Alexandra," Massie *fils* had garnered further attention as a banjo-playing crusader for the poor and disenfranchised across the state. When Governor Bill Weld advocated tough welfare reform as a solution to Massachusetts' problems, Massie replied that attributing poverty to lack of moral virtue was a dubious rationalization that had been used throughout history, from Biblical times on.

As the votes ticked in, analysts suggested that future Democratic candidates would have to scale back talk on health care and other social-welfare programs. Massie, his elder son by his side, demurred. "The integrity of our democracy depends on the willingness of politicians to lose elections rather than betray their principles," he said.

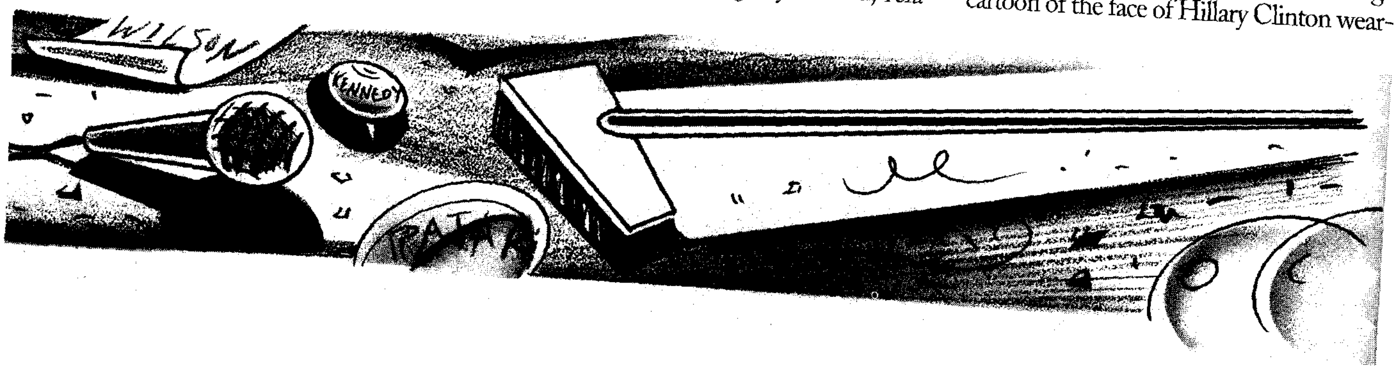
He may have been overoptimistic. The Imperial Ballroom continued cheering for Kennedy, whose generational circumstance, name, and money had propelled him to victory. Meanwhile, the similarly liberal Bob Massie, thirty-eight years old, relatively anonymous, and outspent by a wide margin, lost, seventy-one per cent to twenty-eight per cent. He left the gathering with a final thought: "Just as there is no honor in a mercenary victory, there is no shame in a principled defeat."

PETE'S PROMISE

FLOATING in the glass display cases in the lobby of the Doubletree Hotel Los Angeles Airport, where Pete Wilson's supporters had gathered to celebrate his reëlection as governor, were Republican Lady Resort Clothes: a white felt cowboy hat trimmed with white braiding and faux pearls; smooth disks of turquoise beach glass suspended from chunky gold ear clips; a sleeveless oatmeal-colored knit tunic buttoned up over a disembodied cream-colored turtleneck and wheat-colored twill pants.

There was an array of bumper stickers available for two dollars and fifty cents apiece at a table manned by some well-groomed Republican young people outside the hotel's Grand Ballroom: "Newt for Speaker," "Impeach Clinton," "I Believe Paula Jones," "Clinton/Gore—Out in 4," "Reagan '96," "Quayle for President '96," "Rush Is Right," "Dornan '96" (with a shamrock), "Limbaugh '96" (with a microphone), and "Health Care" (with the "C" printed as the Communist hammer and sickle).

T-shirts for ten dollars and fifteen dollars apiece were also available at the same table: "Tax Cheat" (lettered above a large cartoon of the face of Hillary Clinton wear-



ing a headband), "Wife Cheat" (lettered above a large cartoon of a pouchy-faced Bill), "A Donkey Was Brutally Beaten to Make This Shirt" (showing a Democratic donkey), "Free O.J.: Hillary Did It."

There were many blond people around of both genders. There were many dark-blue suits worn by blond people of both genders. Number of ponytails on young men wearing suits: three. Number of minority males wearing coats and ties: virtually all. Number of African-American young men wearing blue blazers and tiny diamond studs in their left earlobes: one.

Cheers for Pete Wilson: loud. Cheers for Gayle Wilson: louder. Cheers for the victory announcement of the "Three Strikes and You're Out" ballot initiative: louder still. Cheers for the victory announcement of Proposition 187, the ballot initiative denying state services to illegal immigrants: absolutely thunderous. Attempts made by Pete Wilson, speaking calmly and reasonably in the ballroom, his simultaneously pinched and boyish face bobbing above the microphone, to portray Proposition 187 as a measure not about Race, Color, or Creed but only about Fairness: several. Likelihood that the measure will be put into practice any time soon: small. Relief at not having to deal with the problems of implementation: seemingly widespread.

What Janet Nicholas, of Sonoma, a prominent Wilson volunteer, a former county supervisor, the operator of a family vineyard, and a spare-time worker with juveniles in trouble, had to say about the attitudes she noticed during her get-out-the-vote phone calls: "It seemed as if it was a relief to finally talk about it—to say we can't be tolerant of everything, that we demand basic civility toward other people in our school system and throughout our society."

The views of Kayvan Eslambolipour, an Iranian weight-lifting champion of a decade or so ago, which is who an olive-skinned young man wearing a tweed jacket festooned with a Wilson button, a Huffington button, and a "Yes on 187" button, and accompanied by his shy and smiling, identically festooned, non-English-speaking wife, turned out to be: "We are two *legal* immigrants. The American Weightlifting Association invited me to come over and train their weight lifters, and now it is one of my jobs. For the second job, I work in rental cars. I came over here one and a half years ago, and then it was about three months ago my wife and my kid came over. And we are legal immigrants. And we are allowed to stay here for about two years more. We think there has to be some difference between legal and illegal. When you spend your money, you take your money from the throats of your children to harmonize with the law. There must be some difference. Not to be allowed to go to school? We can't say to restrict the education. We don't know exactly, but *some* difference, *some* restriction. And if we don't do that, there will be many too many immigrants here and then it will make the life of the other people harder. There must be some *regulation*. That is the point."

THE NEW DIVIDE

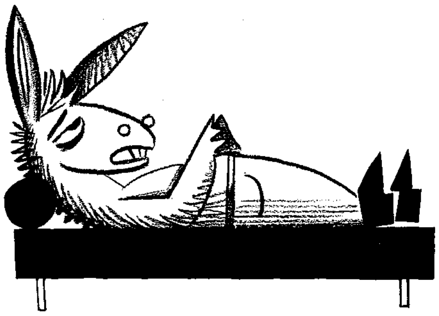
EVEN before the news of the Republican Party's ascendancy swept across the networks last week, the denizens of permanent Washington wondered how the latest cultural revolution would change what Tim Russert and Cokie Roberts insist on calling "this town." The Brookings Institution sinks once more, Heritage and the American Enterprise Institute are back. Bye-bye, Bombay Club; hello again, The Palm, Morton's, and Ruth's Chris Steak House. Out with the Volvos, in with the Cutlass Supremes. Out with Capitol Hill yuppies and their pasta machines and hardwood floors, in with old fogies with their snap-front boxer shorts and vintage editions of "The Road to Serfdom."

These surface details will shift, it's true, but Washington never really changes much—at least, not on the basis of a shift in party dominance. Brooks Brothers will do well either way. Washingtonians will be wearing the big-guy policy shirts forever. Something about the city whacks away all populist pretensions from its newcomers. When Duke Zeibert opens another restaurant, they'll all come running.

What does seem clear from the elections is that Washington, D.C., more than ever before, is a place split severely along racial and class lines. The Anacostia River runs through the city, dividing the black and mainly lower-income population to the east, which was the foundation of support for the former mayor and convict Marion Barry, from the whites and middle-class blacks to the west, who voted in surprisingly large numbers for Carol Schwartz, a white former District council member. Barry, who won his fourth term with fifty-six per cent of the vote, backs an Afrocentric school curriculum and has come to rely on members of the Nation of Islam for organizational help. After he won the Democratic primary, his message of conciliation to those who did not vote for him was "Get over it." His true antagonists now will be the Republicans in Congress, who still hold so much power over the District. "A TALE OF TWO CITIES" and "A RIVER RUNS THROUGH IT." Expect those headlines from D.C., over and over. The rest is just style.

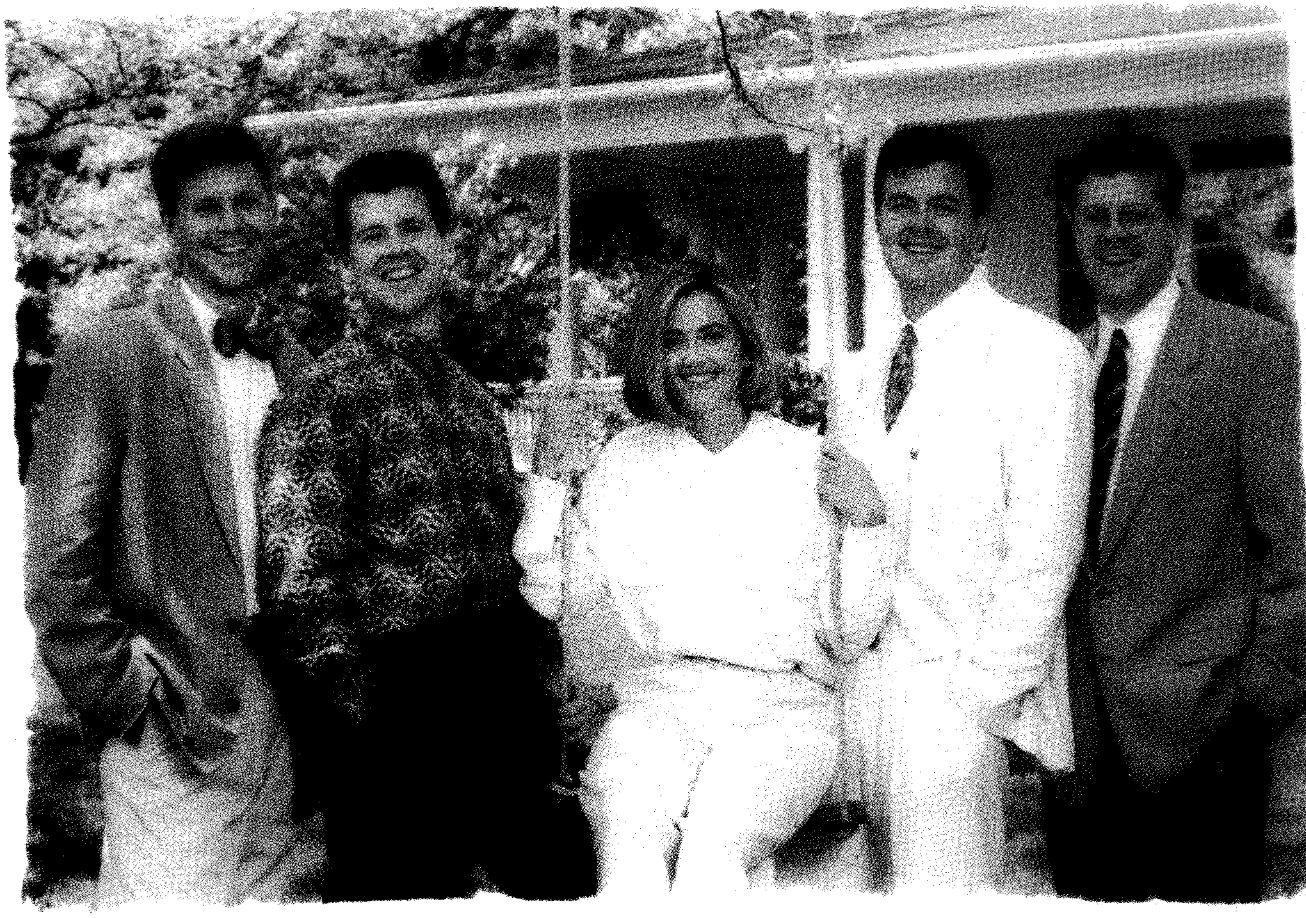
SORTING IT OUT

THE election of Bill Clinton in 1992 saddled liberals with the awful burden of taking power seriously. Now the rout of an entire cohort of liberal and moderate candidates presents the opposite problem: how to live with the hard fact of marginalization. Is there an etiquette appropriate to the realization that millions of Americans voted to deactivate the President's activist government? Disappointed Election Night commentators tied themselves into knots to explain away this massive repudiation: the people were voting *against* incumbents, not for those actors and retired football players who promised to do as little as possible as soon as they got to Washington. Underneath these rationalizations, you knew they really wanted to shout simply, "The people are *wrong!*" But our populist political culture does not permit blaming the people. So what are liberals to do? The alternatives appear to be moping, soul-searching, or moving to the right, which many liberals have already been doing for a decade or so. Perhaps the answer is therapy: the helping professions, if they put their collective talents to work, just might find a cure for liberalism. ♦



This week's contributors: David Remnick, Susan Orlean, Amy Wilentz, Mimi Swartz, Jeffrey Toobin, Stephen Rodrick, Jamie Wolf, D.R., James Traub.

The McCooeys



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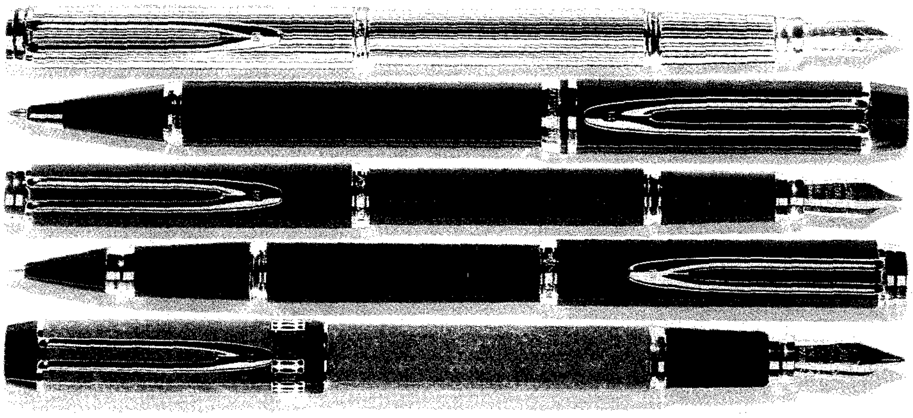

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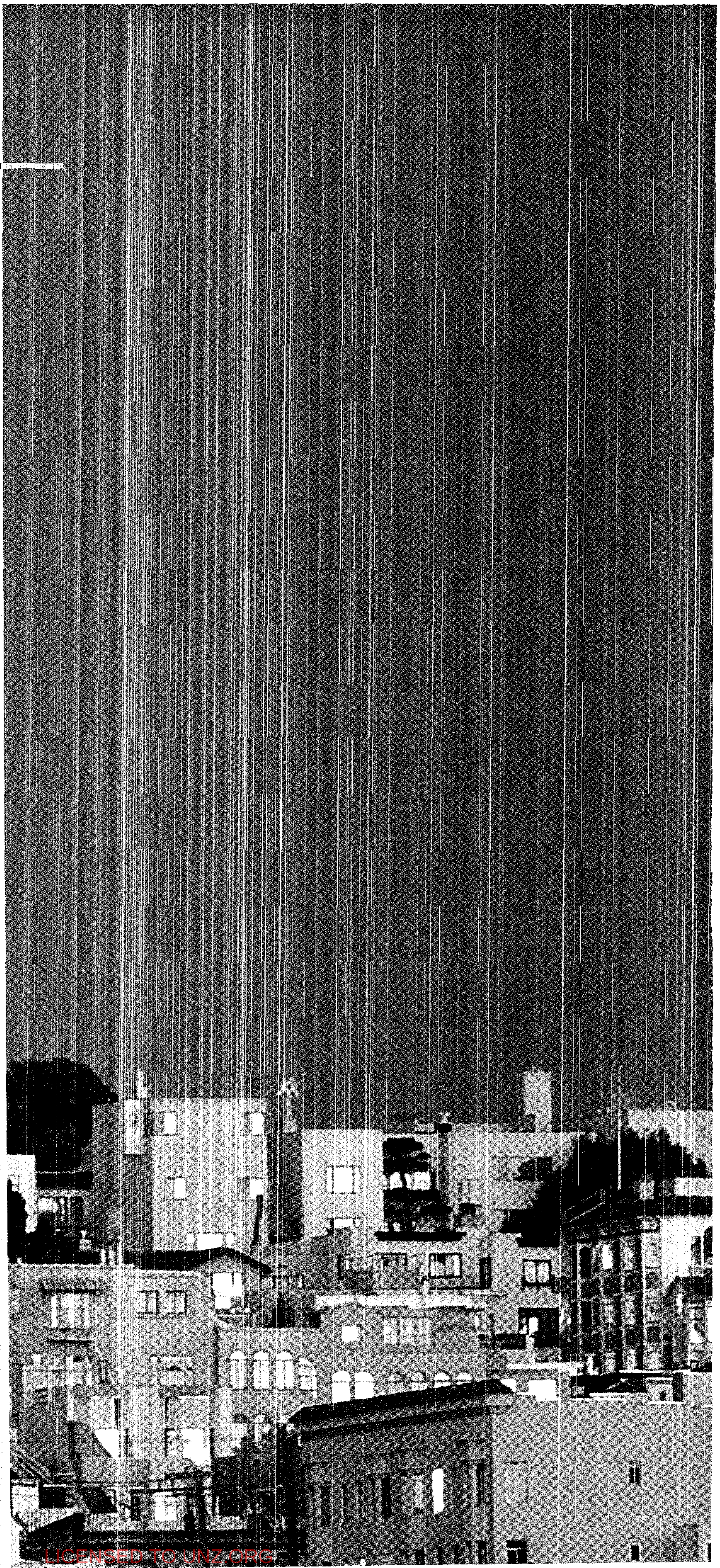

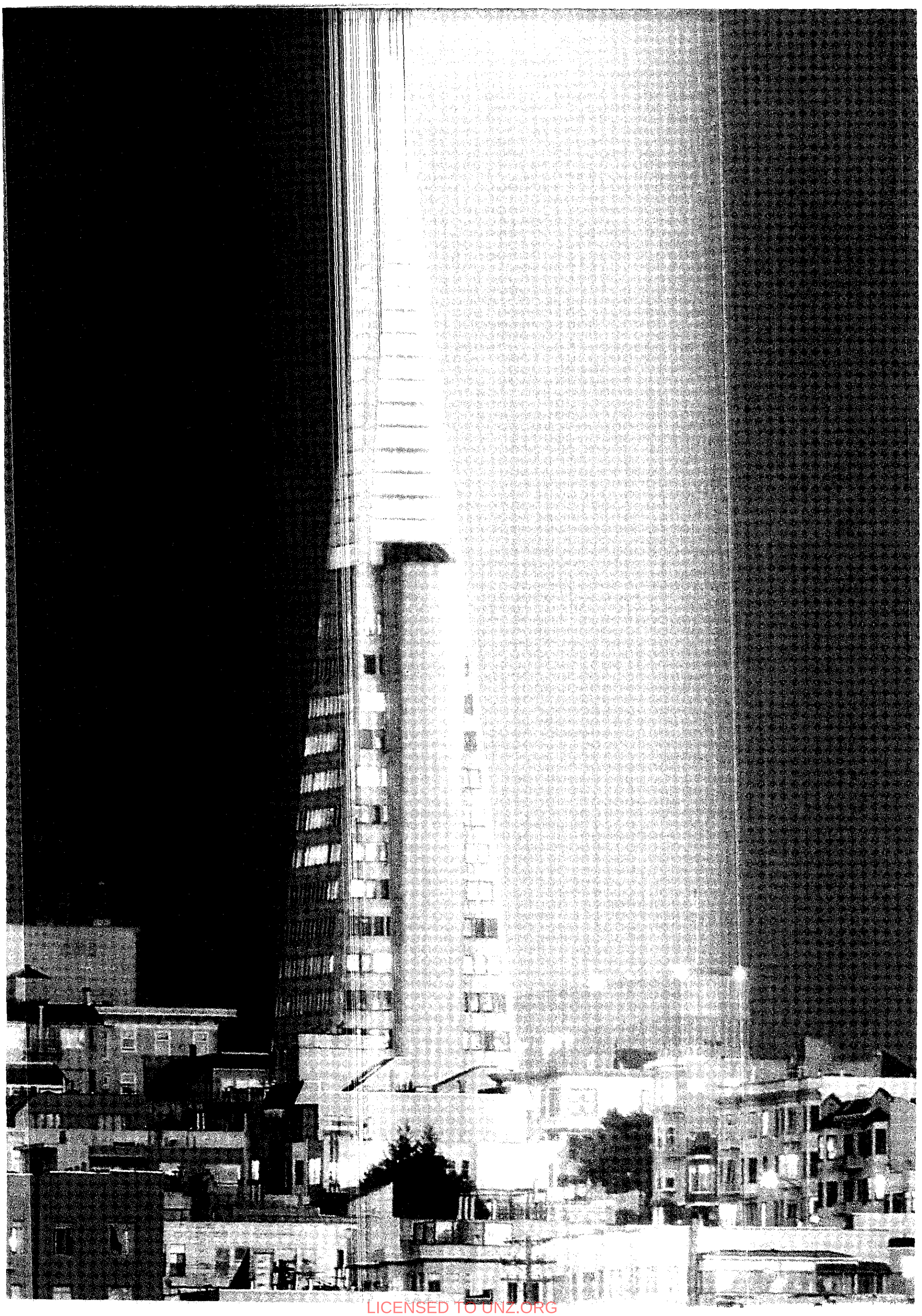

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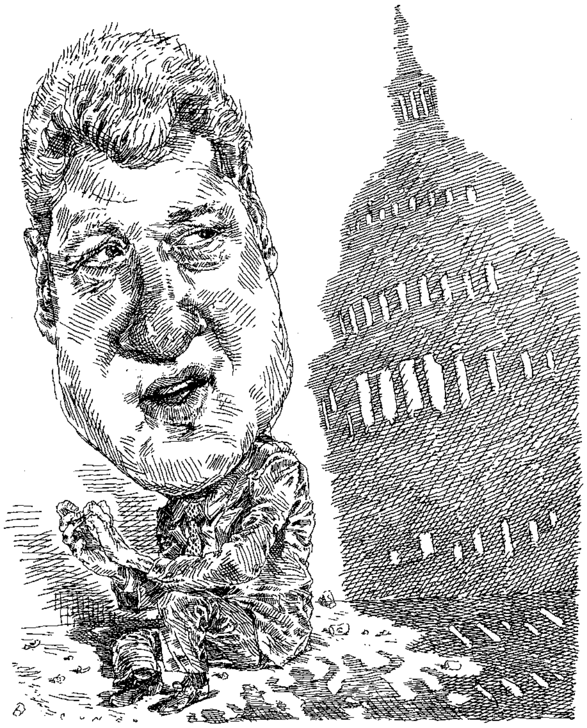
LETTER FROM WASHINGTON

YOU SAY YOU WANT A REVOLUTION

Just two years ago, Bill Clinton and the Democrats were in tune with the country's anti-establishment mood. Now the Republicans are the unlikely rebels with a cause.

BY MICHAEL KELLY

UNDERSTANDING the White House's pained bewilderment over what happened in the midterm election of 1994 begins with a matter of cultural bias. This occurred to me on Election Night, while I was drinking a five-and-a-half-dollar glass of name-brand bourbon in the basement ballroom of a Washington hotel, chatting with a man in a Bill Clinton mask, and watching a thousand or so mostly young Republicans celebrate their party's greatest victory since 1946 with all the wild abandon of a librarians' luncheon.



Election Night victory parties are interesting for their purity. The nation's two great parties are infinitely more varied than their simplistic representations in the press, but the hard core of each is composed of people bound by a fairly rigid shared outlook and is stereotypical to the point of caricature, and it is the hard core that shows up at the parties' parties.

The crowd at the Renaissance Hotel, on the fraying edge of Washington's downtown, was good-looking, if you don't mind a certain amount of smugness showing in the face. Almost everybody, men and women, wore a suit, and even though it was hot in the ballroom, the men kept their ties clinched up tightly, and the women looked as fresh as paint. There was a band playing the songs of yesterday's rebellions—"I Feel Good," "Good Golly Miss Molly"—and the bandleader was doing what he could to get the collective G.O.P. booty shaking. "Well, I guess it seems like we got a little something to celebrate already!" he was yelling. "So, what we're gonna do, we're gonna ask you to sing along now. Y'all ready? O.K., now. We gonna party down, all the way down, down to the ground, gonna party, party, party, party, gonna party down. Oh, yeah, gonna party down, down to the ground, all the way down. I say Yeah! I say Oh! I say Yay! I say Yo!"

About two people made a faint pass at joining this embarrassment, and one middle-aged fellow with white Newt Gingrich helmet hair danced for thirty seconds or so, but almost everybody else ignored the spectacle. They were all too busy talking politics and networking. I wandered around, catching snatches of earnest conversation: "I'm telling you, that's what leadership's all about." "I'm serious. We've got to cut him out *now*. We do *not* want Pete Wilson to become President." "Bob, I'd like you to meet Scott. He used to be a big shot at H.H.S. under Bush and now he's with Exxon."

The only person I could see who was having anything close to a high old time was the man in the Clinton mask. The mask, designed to capture and exaggerate the look of Slick Willie, as the Richard Nixon masks of yesteryear were designed to portray Tricky Dick, was made so that the President's mouth was set in a phony and leering smile. To augment this effect, the man had, dangling from the breast pocket of his suit coat, a large and slightly soiled white brassiere. He was strolling about, pretending to hit on young women. He would get up next to them, stick his rubber leer in their faces, and say, "Hi, there. Ah'm yore President. How yew?" Then he would lift the mask and show them who he really was. They all seemed to know him, and they would laugh when he revealed himself. "Oh, he is *so* funny," one young woman said to another. "But the truth is, he's a card-carrying Republican." The other young woman shook the man's hand with mock solemnity, and said, "Hello, Mr. President. Tough luck, Mr. President." All three laughed at that.

On the television screen, Peter Jennings, wearing that look of mildly condescending disapproval he gets when he talks about Republicans, noted that George W. Bush seemed to be beating Ann Richards for the Texas Governor's seat. Everyone cheered. "O.K., here's a quote for you, but it has to be from an anonymous source," said a man whose name I hadn't quite caught anyway. "Looks like Ann Richards has a silver boot up her ass." (This was a reference to Ms. Richards' funny, cruel insult at the 1988 Democratic Convention, to the effect that George Bush could not help his frequent verbal stumbles, because he was "born with a silver foot in his mouth." In politics, payback is entirely predictable Hell.)

By ten-thirty, the size of the Republican victory was apparent. At a Democratic Election Night party, this would have been the signal to move into high gear, drinking and dancing and carrying on in ways that would lead to scenes of dawn debauchery and disgrace, and to heads that had to be carried around the next day like unusually thin-shelled eggs. With this crowd, it was a signal that it was time to go home and get to bed, the better to begin the first day of the takeover of America clear-eyed and bright and ready for work. Soon the up escalators were filled with young men and young women departing sober.

And here was where the problem of cultural bias arose. Here in the wildly misleading appearance of this scene lurked the point that the White House is still having a very, very hard time grasping. Which is not surprising. We are all creatures of our times, and during the times that formed the culture of Clinton's Washington the kind of people who were at the Renaissance Hotel that night were a known commodity. They were conservative, inclined to like things the way they were, predictable in their thoughts and habits. They were more interested in money than in ideas. They were squares: the men were the sort who pantsed people like Ralph Nader in high school, and the women were the sort who liked to stay up all night partying in college and then not have sex—at least, not with you. The last thing in the world you would think of, looking at people like this, was that they were revolutionaries, that they were seriously, passionately committed to radical change in American society. Radicals were people who looked like Abbie Hoffman when they were young and Ira Magaziner when they were older.

But the core activists of the Republican Party—the neat young men and women at the Renaissance Hotel and their friends—are indeed radicals, quite serious about revolutionary change in America. This is not a secret to most Americans, and is, at bottom, why on November 8th voters across the country, in elections on all levels, rejected Democrats and embraced Republicans, ending in one shocking, sudden spasm an era that began sixty-two years ago with the election of Franklin Delano Roosevelt—ending, at least for now, the reign of liberal Democratic federalism that has defined modern government in this country.

There were Democrats in Washington who understood what had happened. Mostly, and tellingly, they were connected with the centrist Democratic Leadership Council, a group that Bill Clinton had helped create and that, in turn, had helped create the idea of the New Democrat, which Clinton rode to victory in 1992. What happened in 1992 suggested to D.L.C.-style Democrats that they had been right in thinking they could rescue their party from its decline

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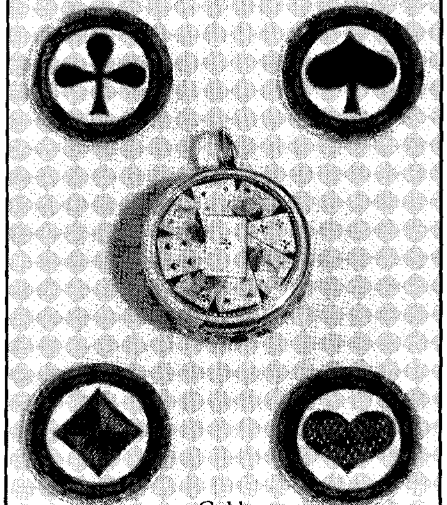

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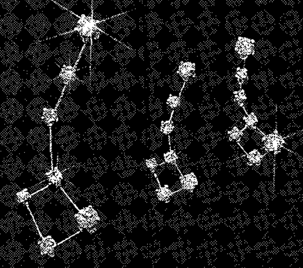

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by pursuing an agenda more in tune with the values of most voters. What happened two years later suggested to them that they had failed in this historic effort.

"The first thing to understand is that this was an earthquake," the D.L.C. executive director, Al From, told me on the morning after. "The New Deal era is over. It was a grand and glorious era for Democrats, but it is over. The nails are in the coffin of New Deal liberalism, and it is dead and buried. It was a great ideology while it lasted—it was the ideology that built the middle class of America—but the policies that built the middle class can no longer earn their support. And we have lost them. The truth of the Democratic Party is that there is no party. There is no base. We have lost the middle class, and instead we have minority voters, a few liberals, and union members. That's it. That's all we have left. Where do we go from here?"

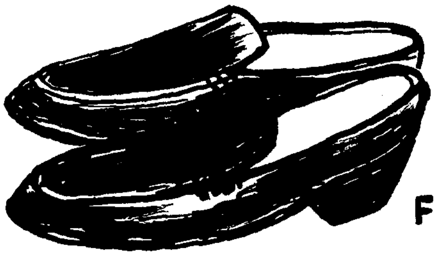
THE numbers illustrate vividly what From is talking about. The Republican victory was as near to being a complete rout as could have been imagined, cutting across the country and through contests on every level, from the United States Senate to state legislatures. One simple fact, much touted by Republican leaders in the days after the election, puts the dimensions of the wipeout in proper perspective, repudiating some Democrats' insistence that the 1994 elections were driven by "anti-incumbent" anger, rather than anger directed specifically against them. While Democratic incumbents lost across the board, not a single Republican incumbent in any Senate, House, or governor's race went down.

In House contests, the G.O.P. made its largest gains since 1946, achieving victory (if undecided contests have the expected outcomes) in fifty-six races against Democratic incumbents or for open seats formerly held by Democrats, in the latter case winning twenty-one of thirty-two possible seats. Republicans also won sixteen open seats formerly held by their own party. All told, the G.O.P. expects to send seventy-two freshmen to Congress, bringing its total membership to two hundred and thirty seats, as opposed to the Democrats' two hundred and four. The Republican gains came in every region of the nation: three seats in the Northeast, fifteen in the Midwest, five in the Rocky Mountain states, and ten on the West Coast. The most spectacular gains were in the South, which saw the completion of a political evolution that began with the rejection by white Dixie Democrats of Lyndon Johnson's civil-rights agenda. There the Republicans finally achieved complete control of what was for a century the Democrats' great stronghold. They won nineteen seats, giving their party majority status among Southern members of Congress for the first time since 1872.

The House deluge washed out some of the most senior and powerful Democrats: Speaker of the House Tom Foley; Chicago's Dan Rostenkowski, the longtime chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, who was recently forced to resign his post after being indicted for misappropriation of funds; Texas Representative Jack Brooks, a fixture on the Hill since 1952 and the chairman of the House Judiciary Committee; and Dan Glickman, also of Chicago, the chairman of the House Intelligence Committee.

In Senate races, two Democratic incumbents, Tennessee's Jim Sasser and Pennsylvania's Harris Wofford, lost to Republican challengers. Republican candidates also beat, by humiliating margins, Democratic candidates in every one of the open Senate races—nine out of nine. Since six of those open seats had formerly been held by Democrats, the result was a net gain for the Republicans of eight Senate seats on Election Day, giving their party a 52–48 majority. They added a fifty-third seat the next day, when Alabama's Democratic Senator Richard Shelby made the long-expected announcement that he was switching parties.

On the state level, the Republicans picked up twelve governorships, to give the Party a total of thirty, including seven of those in the eight largest states.



Last week's elections completed the Republican takeover of the governorships of the large industrial states of the Midwest and the Northeast which had been under way for years, and left the Democrats with Florida as the only large state still in their gubernatorial camp. In state legislatures, the Republicans picked up more than four hundred seats nationwide, to win control of legislative chambers in seventeen states previously held by Democrats.

When the voting patterns from data gathered in exit polling for the networks and major newspapers are broken down, the extent of the Democratic meltdown becomes clearer, and, for the Democrats, grimmer. Post-election surveys clearly show the diminution of base that Al From was referring to. Democrats, who have enjoyed majority status in terms of simple party identification until recently, appear to have joined the Republicans as a minority party this year: only thirty-eight per cent of the voters called themselves Democrats, compared with thirty-six per cent who called themselves Republicans. A remarkably high twenty-six per cent labelled themselves independent, but in their actual voting the independent voters went Republican over Democratic by an eight-point margin. Measuring voter sentiment not by party identification but by ideology brought even worse news to the Democrats: fully eighty-two per cent of the voters defined themselves as either moderates or conservatives—forty-five per cent moderate and a remarkable thirty-seven per cent conservative.

By race and sex, the news was also bad. Fifty-eight per cent of the white voters landed on the Republican side, while only forty-two per cent supported Democrats—figures that give the G.O.P. a sixteen-point advantage over the Democrats among the racial group that, according to one exit poll, constituted eighty-four per cent of voters. By contrast, ninety-two per cent of the black voters favored Democrats, but blacks represent only eleven per cent of the electorate. The Democratic Party did enjoy its customary advantage among female voters, with fifty-four per cent of the women favoring Democrats. But this was more than offset by the fact that fifty-seven per cent of the men voted Republican.

By education level, the Democrats

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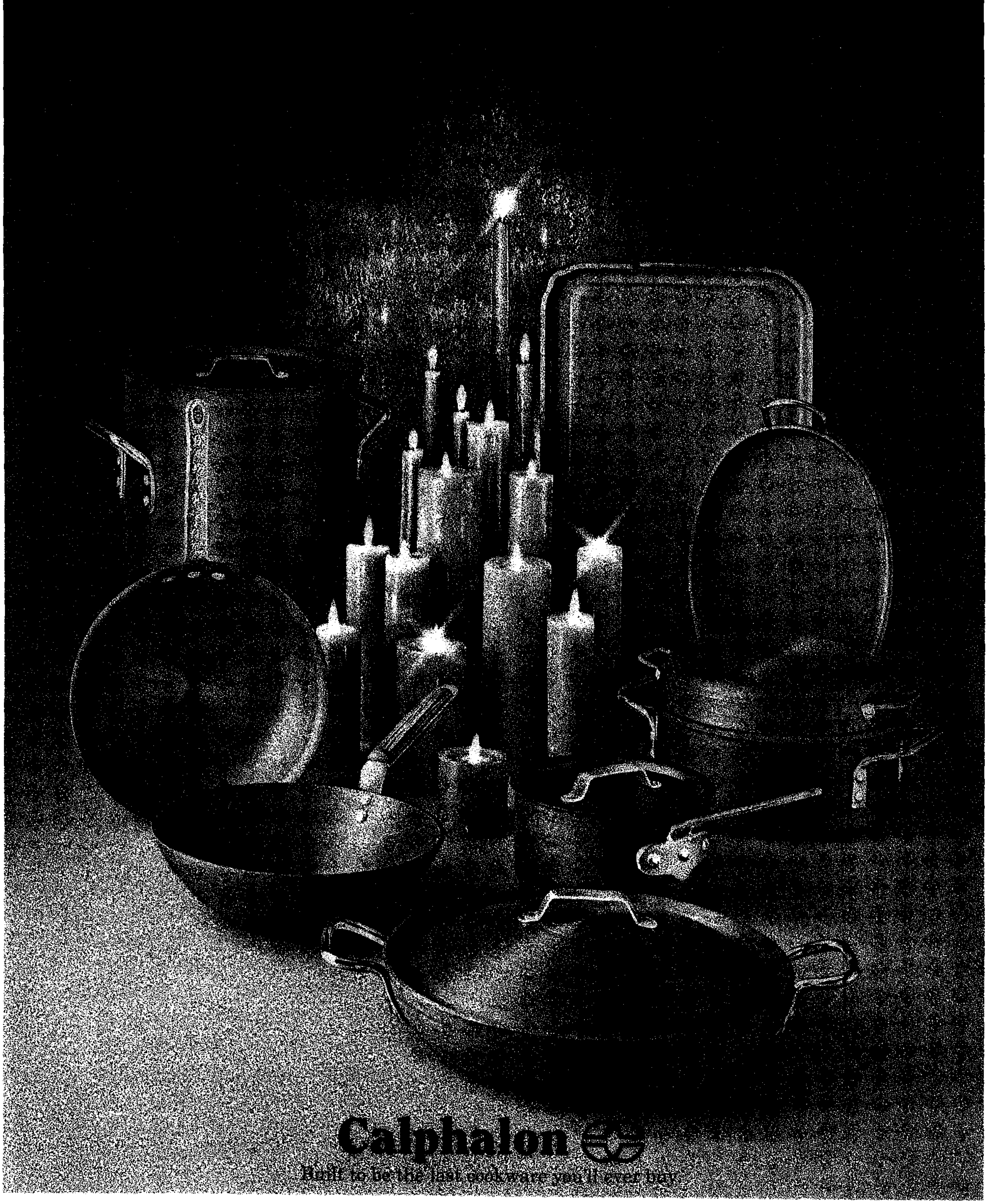
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showed strength among the lowest and the highest—those who had not graduated from high school and those with advanced degrees. Yet the vast middle—those with high-school degrees and those with at least some college education—broke Republican, by modest margins. By income level, the only group in these elections that voted overwhelmingly Democratic was the poor—those who earned less than fifteen thousand dollars a year. They went Democratic by sixty-three per cent to thirty-seven. The rich—those making more than a hundred thousand dollars a year—split precisely the other way, going for Republicans by sixty-three per cent to thirty-seven. In the middle categories of income, the voters tended Republican by small to moderate margins.

Worst of all for the Democrats, it appeared that their party can no longer rely on its traditional base of support among voters over the age of sixty. Despite an aggressive eleventh-hour attack, led by the President, that accused Republicans of secretly plotting to cut Social Security and Medicare, elderly voters split fifty-fifty between the parties.

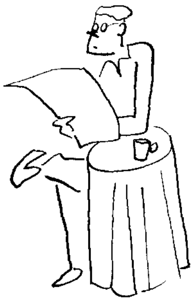
No one can be expected to grasp immediately the full implications of being struck between the eyes by a two-by-four, so it was not surprising that the initial White House response to what had happened, and why it had happened, contained an element of stunned denial. The first White House analysis, as it was articulated by the President and his senior aides, rested on three linked rationales, each of which implicitly questioned the idea that the Republican landslide represented a legitimate mandate for sweeping change.

The three rationales were: one, that the public—goaded by cynical reporters, vicious radio-talk-show hosts, religious zealots, and unscrupulous campaign consultants—acted out of wrongheaded, irrational anger rather than out of considered judgment; two, that the elections were not driven by genuine conflict over ideas, and the results therefore did not represent rejection of either the President's policies or the underlying Democratic philosophy of government; and, three, that the campaign proposals espoused by the Republicans were not to be taken seriously but had been put forward simply to manipulate the voters, and that the new G.O.P. majority would not be motivated or united enough to put them into effect. Coupled with this analysis was the stated hope that the President would be able to work, at least to some degree, with the Gingrichite Congress.

The President first sketched out this line of reasoning in a press conference on the afternoon of the day after. It was a painful thing to watch. Clearly exhausted, Clinton was, as the Washington *Post's* Mary McGrory wrote, "pretty much in the Ancient Mariner mode, haunted and babbling." He did what he had to do under the desperate circumstances, extending promises of coöperation to the new Republican majority and accepting what he somewhat grudgingly referred to as his "share of responsibility." But these protestations of amity and apology were undercut by the President's over-all tone of uncomprehending disbelief.

The American people, Clinton said, had sent him to Washington "to rebuild the American Dream, to change the way Washington does business, to make our country work for ordinary citizens again." He had, he said, made great progress on these fronts. As he saw it, the people supported him in his efforts, and had thrown his party out of office across the country only to register disapproval of the speed and efficacy of his reforms. "Last night, they said they were not satisfied with the progress we have made," he said. "But they still want the same goal." The ABC News White House correspondent, Brit Hume, his tone politely incredulous, asked the President if he really meant to say "that the message the voters sent yesterday was basically an extension of the demand for change they made when you were elected in '92, and that you've been going in the right direction, but perhaps need to go farther and faster with the same agenda?"

The question stopped Clinton in his tracks for a few fumbling moments. Perhaps, he said, what had happened was that the people had failed to understand and fully appreciate what he had done in reducing the deficit, combatting crime, and making government smaller and more responsive. Perhaps, he said, the people were telling him, "Look, you may have done all these things, although we haven't heard much of it, we're not sure we believe it, but even if the deficit is down, the government smaller, more is being invested in education, the crime bill is passed, and the economy is growing, we still feel insecure. We don't feel that our incomes are going up, that our jobs are more stable, that our neighborhoods are safer, that the fabric of American life is growing more civilized and more law-abiding."



The operative point here was the suggestion that the voters were acting on emotion—on what they "felt"—rather than on the reasonable determination that in fact the deficit had only temporarily been made smaller and was projected to balloon again soon, that government was still gigantic and measurably more intrusive under Clinton, that real family incomes were not going up, that neighborhoods were not recognizably safer, and that the fabric of life was not more civilized and law-abiding.

The next day, in a speech at his alma mater, Georgetown University, the President returned to and elaborated upon the theme of the American voters' dissociation from reality. He said that he understood that voters, in electing him as a New Democrat, had clearly voiced their desire for "smaller, more effective, less intrusive government that reflects both our values and our interests," and that he had thought "until Tuesday" that he had made "a pretty good beginning" in meeting that demand.

"In the last twenty-two months," he said, citing his accomplishments, "we brought the deficit down more than at any time in history in a comparable period, and next year we'll have three years of deficit reduction in a row for the first time since Mr. Truman was President. We've reduced the federal workforce by seventy thousand already and put it on a path to shrink to its smallest size since Mr. Kennedy was President. More than five million new jobs have come into our economy, and this year, for the first time in a good long time, a lot of them are high-wage jobs. . . . We have deregulated significant parts of our economy, and we've freed states from regulation so that they can pursue their own path to reform welfare and health care and education. We passed a very strong crime bill with tough penalties, and funds for prison and police. . . . We've supported working families with the Family Leave law, with childhood immunizations, with expanded Head Start, more affordable college loans and income tax cuts for fifteen million working families with incomes of up to twenty-seven thousand dollars."

But the voters, who appeared in the President's depiction as a sort of collective Victorian spinster—frustrated, querulous, and suffering from a national fit of the vapors—just didn't get it. "In an ordinary time, that record would have generated support for congressmen and women who made it," the President continued. "But this is no ordinary time. And on Tuesday the voters reflected their frustration with the pace of change and the messy and often, to them, almost revolting process by which it was made; their frustration that some things were not done which ought to have been done, particularly in the area of political reform. And they clearly said that we ought to do more to limit government's reach into their lives and to make more efficient the government they pay for."

What is wrong with this analysis is not that the Clinton Administration didn't do what the President says it did. In fact, Clinton's accomplishments are real enough. It is also true, as the Republican strategist Bill Kristol acknowledges, that Clinton has not been treated altogether reasonably by the voters. "People keep saying that he ran as a New Democrat and governed as an old, and that is not entirely fair or true," Kristol told me.

But there is a powerful logic behind the voters' wholesale rejection of Clinton and the Democrats. At Georgetown, Clinton recalled that as a Presidential candidate he had said that "the main job of government is not to solve all our problems." This was revisionism on a breathtaking scale. As a candidate, Clinton had indeed argued that people must bear more personal responsibility for the woes in their lives. But, beyond that limited message, he had run for office on promises of delivering immense, radical change. Recognizing that voters were properly appalled at a gov-

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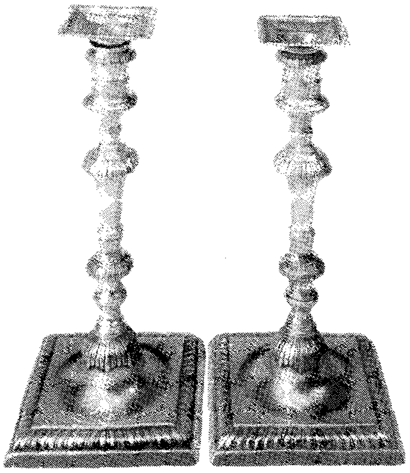

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ernment that every year was costing them a great deal of money and also chronically failing to address huge societal problems, he had run as a revolutionary figure: a Washington outsider who would in short order reform a national politics corrupted by the pervasive legal bribery of lobbyists and political-action committees, reform welfare, provide universal health care, restore safety to the streets, enable all citizens to secure a college education or vocational training, and end congressional gridlock. He had been an eminently convincing salesman, and voters had believed him.

What Clinton was able to deliver in office, while not at all meaningless, was far more modest, and in important aspects ran counter to his campaign positions. It was hard to square the populist, anti-Washington candidate with the victor who celebrated with the largest and most grandiose Inauguration in history; with a national Democratic Party that set new records for raising "soft money" contributions; and with an Administration that surpassed the Bush record in the selling of ambassadorships. It was also hard to reconcile the promise of a culturally conservative New Democrat with the reality of a President who immediately moved to order the armed forces to accept gays in their ranks, who took to new heights the practice of allotting top Administration jobs according to race and gender, and who appointed a Surgeon General with a fondness for incendiary remarks on matters of sex, drugs, and abortion. The cause of New Democratism was dealt its most severe blow, however, by the Administration's proposed health-care plan, fashioned largely in secret under the direction of the President's wife—a plan that struck many voters, and even some of the President's own Cabinet officers, as a vast and politically unacceptable expansion of federal authority into the private sphere.

By the time the Administration's health-care initiative collapsed, several months ago, Clinton's New Democrat image was dead, and the President was instead regarded by a majority of voters as emblematic of the old-fashioned Democratic liberalism they had rejected in principle years earlier. That gave the Republicans a gift they had long sought as the antidote to the popularity of Democratic incumbents in their home districts even after Democratic ideas had fallen from grace: the nationalization of local elections. Into this environment, on September 27th, stepped Newt Gingrich and his Contract with America, a wide-ranging program of sharply conservative economic, social, and political reforms. A desperate White House seized upon the Contract as a chance to change the national conversation from the unhappy subject of Bill Clinton, and attempted to reframe the 1994 elections as a referendum on Clintonism versus Reaganism.

Clinton's advisers now acknowledge that the elections did constitute a national referendum, but they fudge on the vital question of what the referendum was about. "The main thing that happened in 1994 was that the congressional elections were nationalized," the President's pollster, Stan Greenberg, told me. "Democrats in this period became associated with Congress, with politics, with government, and people voted against that, and it was an important factor in the Democrats' defeat. Democratic candidates were seen as part of a government and part of a Congress that people hated, so they became objects of the people's protests."

In reality, of course, Congress has been a Democratic institution for forty years. But many voters, Greenberg claims, did not really understand the Democrats' hegemony over Congress until the actions of the Clinton Administration drove the point home. "Before 1992, most people did not realize Democrats controlled Congress," Greenberg said. "That is a fact, and I have the data to support it. Congress was not identified with either party. This year, the overwhelming majority of the country knew that it was run by Democrats and had a Democratic character. And I think this is a result of two years of Clinton activism. His attempt to get Congress to move with him gave Congress, which people did not like, a recognized Democratic character."

But Greenberg, like Clinton, denies that the midterm elections were in any way a referendum on Clintonism versus Reaganism, or on the Republican ideas expressed in the Contract with America. "Republicans did not run on the

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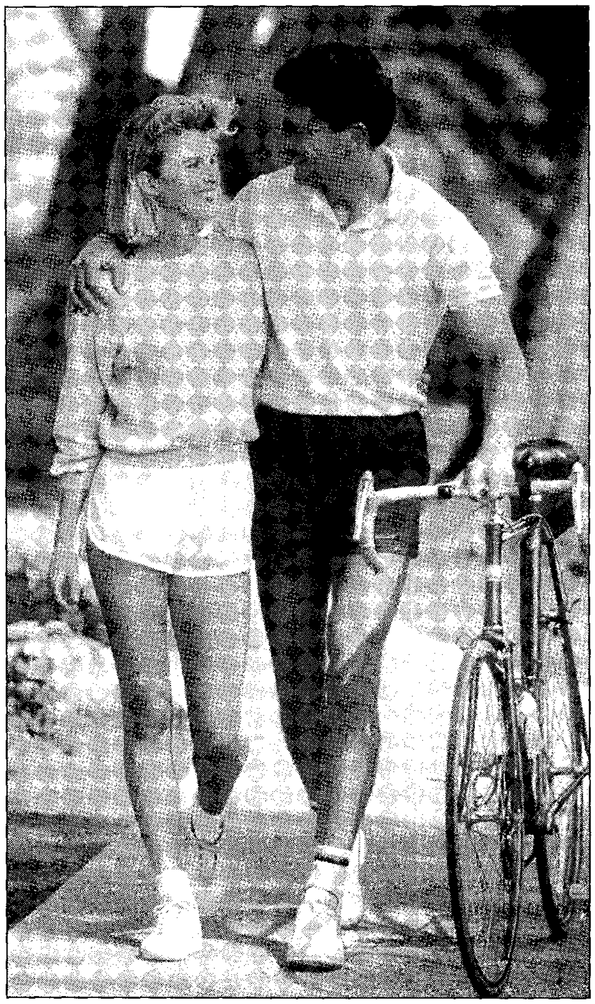

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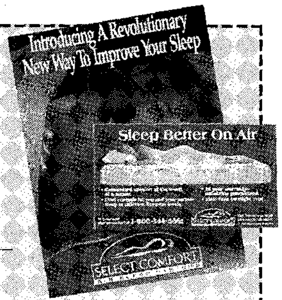

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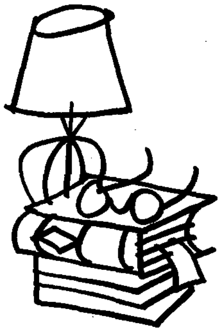
Contract," he says. "They ran no generic advertisements for it. No candidates really ran on it. We did not see them saying that we should roll back Clinton's tax increases on the wealthy. They did not defend cutting spending on Medicare and Social Security. They did not really advance an argument for limited government and tax policies to favor entrepreneurship."



Given that only two weeks ago the President and his men were arguing that the 1994 elections would indeed be a referendum on the Contract with America, the White House's post-election counter-spin beggars belief. "The only alternative explanation for the fact that Republicans won and Democrats lost across the country is that it is simply due to a loathing of Bill Clinton," Kristol, the Republican strategist, said. "I don't believe that. I think it was about ideas, and the Democrats helped make it about ideas. They helped nationalize the elections by running hard against the Contract with America. And Republicans did run on the ideas in the Contract. The three generic Republican TV ads were all ideological. They said, 'If you want lower taxes and less government, vote Republican.' And I think that G.O.P. candidates ran, to a very united extent, against big-government liberalism. In their speeches and their ads they said, over and over, 'If you want less government and less taxes, vote for us. If you want more government and more taxes, vote for the other guy.' "

WITHIN forty-eight hours of the closing of the polls, it was clear that all the explanations and excuses of the President's men were irrelevant. As far as the new Republican leadership was concerned, the midterm elections were certainly a referendum on ideas, and the leadership intended to make those ideas reality. Striking a note of bemused combativeness in television interviews and at a press conference in Atlanta the day after the election, the new Speaker of the House, Newt Gingrich, pointed out that he had been telling everybody for months exactly what he intended to do if he got the power to do it. "We intend to be revolutionary, in that we intend to do after the election what we said we would do before the election," he said. "As Speaker, I am obliged to fulfill the Contract."

Bill Paxon, the New York congressman who is the chairman of the Republican Congressional Committee, and who, in his neat blue suit, could be a poster boy for the squares' revolution of '94, appeared before the Washington press bright and early the day after the election to likewise assure the doubters of the seriousness of the G.O.P.'s intent.

"We are committed not just to change the names on the doors across the street," he said. "We intend to have massive and sweeping change within those doors, that is going to rechange the face of the Congress of the United States from this point forward. We are committed to having in the first hundred days the fulfillment of that Contract with America. Some asked last night, 'Well, now that you've won, really you don't have to do that.' Nonsense. The Contract is our Bible. . . . It is our guiding set of principles for the first hundred days, and it will be a template for what we do as the Republican majority in the months and years ahead."

What this meant was simple enough. The Gingrichite Congress would seek a repudiation not just of Clintonism but of the liberal government activism that is the core of the Democratic faith. In their first hundred days, the Republicans have vowed to attempt to pass legislation that would send constitutional amendments to the states calling for a balanced federal budget by the year 2002 and imposing term limits on members of Congress; greatly toughen the welfare-reform program proposed by Clinton, by placing a million and a half welfare families in jobs or work programs by the year 2000 and by denying benefits to the children of unmarried mothers under the age of twenty-one; cut five billion dollars appropriated in this year's crime bill for anti-crime social programs; limit appeals by death-row prisoners and allow prosecutors to use improperly seized evidence; restrict the President's ability to send United States troops to serve under United Nations leadership; deny the Administration the ability to use money saved from defense-spending cuts for social programs; impose a fifty-per-cent cut in the capital-gains-tax rate; raise the Social Security earnings limit previously lowered by the Clinton Administration; enact a "loser pays" law in civil litigation; cut congressional staffing levels by a third and cut the number of congressional committees; require Congress to apply to itself the laws it passes; require a three-fifths majority for passage of any bill raising taxes; and subject federal environmental regulations to risk-assessment and cost-benefit analysis.

This legislative onslaught will place Bill Clinton in a weaker position than that of any American President since Herbert Hoover after the 1930 midterm elections. Senator Phil Gramm, of Texas, the senatorial counterpart of Gingrich, proclaimed memorably, if rudely, last week that the President had only three choices: he could choose to be the engineer of the Republican train; he could stand and wave as it goes by; or he could hop on the tracks and try to stop it.

This was not a totally accurate formulation. A Democratic President—even one with Clinton's Gumby-like flexibility, cannot be the engineer on the sort of train that Gramm and Gingrich want to make run on time. As a matter of practical politics, it would be impossible for a President to lead a crusade against the philosophy and the interests of his own party. Clinton's only option—and one he has already made it clear that he intends to pursue—is a classically Clintonian solution. The President will move far enough to the right-center to meet the Republicans where in good conscience he can—certainly on the line-item veto, probably on foreign affairs, perhaps on welfare and health-care reform—but will also stand in principled opposition to proposals that cannot be squared with bedrock Democratic ideas.

"He has got to stay the course," George Stephanopoulos, the senior policy adviser, told me. "He will not go back on fundamental economic matters. That's part of his job. He made decisions he thought were good for the country." On the crime bill, on welfare reform, and on the ban on assault weapons, there will also be, Stephanopoulos said, "no turning back."

This middle course is bound to be a daunting one, though. When Clinton fights, he will be a lonely figure: he cannot count on much enthusiastic support from bitter congressional Democrats, who blame him for destroying the kingdom they held for the better part of six decades.

"There is one operative question at the moment," the Democratic consultant Ted Van Dyk told me. "Is there any Democratic senator or Democratic congressman or any Democratic governor who wants to run with Bill Clinton at the top of the ticket in 1996? Not on your life. It's over. The President is done. He's finished. He's like that old Thurber cartoon where the guy has just had his head sliced off in a fencing match. He just hasn't noticed it yet, but as soon as he tries to turn or stand up, his head's going to topple right off his neck.

"Here's my prediction: You're going to see very soon articles appearing quoting unnamed Democrats suggesting the President not seek reëlection but devote his energies to simply doing the best job he can over the next two years. After that, people will begin to say it publicly. If Clinton ignores it, early in 1995 you will begin to see Democrats forming exploratory committees for 1996. If Clinton still doesn't announce that he will not seek reëlection, then they will begin to line up to run against him, and the first guy who can put together five cents of name recognition will take the nomination from him."

This political hardship notwithstanding, the logic behind the President's calculation is inescapable. As long as President Clinton still stands for something, he is, at least, still standing. It's more than a little pathetic, but the only real hope for Clinton and his party is that over the next two years the Republicans blow it. There are several wishful scenarios making the Democratic rounds right now: that the G.O.P.'s newly empowered radical wing, led by Gingrich and Gramm, will find itself locked in a crippling battle with its more traditionally conservative Old Guard, led by the new Senate Majority Leader, Bob Dole; that the Republican legislators will collapse under the weight of responsibility when they actually try to fulfill their grand and conflicting promises; that a hubristic Republican Congress will overreach in its passion to remake America, and will repulse a public that is likely to be no more eager for the right's version of what is politically correct than for the left's.

It's all possible. The G.O.P. isn't called the Stupid Party for nothing. Republicans have demonstrated before—in 1930, in 1948, in 1976, in 1992—a nearly awesome ability to marginalize themselves. They could do it again. If Capitol Hill's new powers that be misinterpret the results of 1994 as a mandate for Al D'Amato to lead a Senate Banking Committee inquisition into Whitewater, for Newt Gingrich to Christianize government, for Jesse Helms to take over American foreign policy, we may end up two years from now attending a victory party where we can all get drunk. But, all things considered, I'm betting on an evening of unparalleled sobriety. ◆

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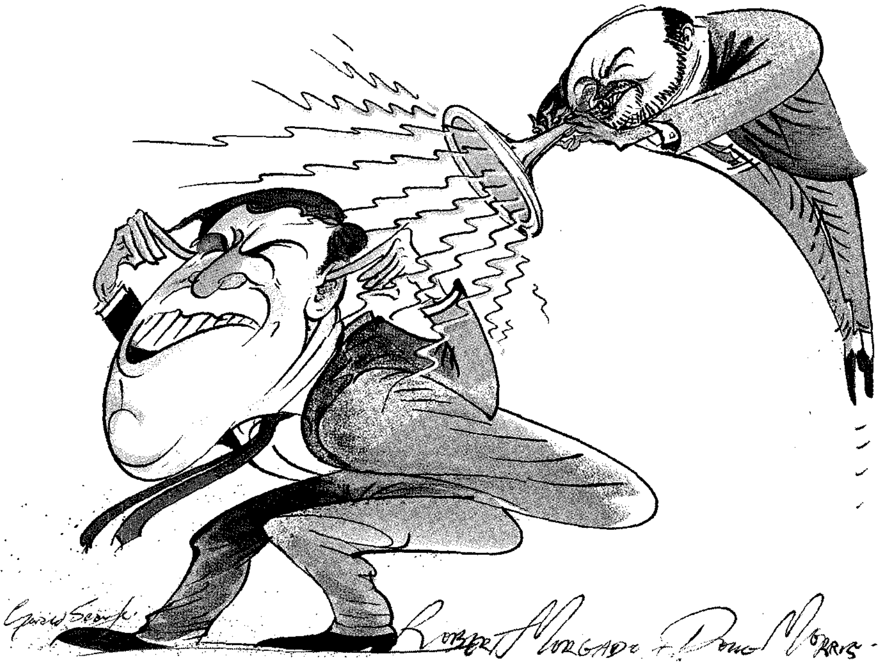
SHOWDOWN AT THE HIT FACTORY

Warner Music's Mo Ostin had one of the most powerful jobs in the industry. When he left it, the record men went to war.

BY FREDRIC DANNEN

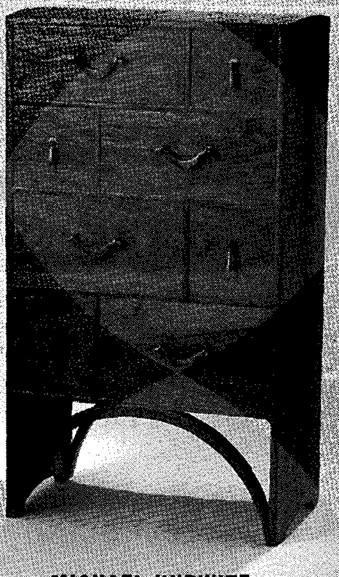
On the morning of October 27, 1994, ten senior executives of the Warner Music Group, the largest record company in the world, met secretly in an apartment on Central Park West and, in effect, declared war on the chairman and chief executive officer of the company, a man named Robert J. Morgado. Warner Music, a division of Time Warner, is the only one of the record industry's six major companies that is American owned, and for decades it had also been the most stable. Now it was on the verge of meltdown.

A mood of rebellion against Morgado had been building for months at all three of the company's big labels—Atlantic Records and Elektra Records, in New York, and Warner Bros. Records, in Los Angeles, the last of which had been run for twenty-five years by a former protégé of Frank Sinatra named Mo Ostin. In the recorded-music industry, which tenders its greatest respect to "record men" or "music men"—those people with the ability to recognize and develop talent—Ostin was revered. He was a paradigm of the type of freewheeling manager who thrived under the late Steve Ross, the chairman of Time Warner. Ross, whatever his shortcomings, had a gift for handling creative people, and he allowed Ostin to run his division without interference; in return, Ostin had made Warner Bros. the most profitable record label in the United States, with a roster of artists that included Madonna, Prince, Paul Simon, Talking Heads, Eric Clapton, and R.E.M. Though Ross, in 1990, had appointed Robert Morgado to his current position as head of all the American labels—along with Warner's foreign labels, record club, and music-publishing company—Ostin, whose title was chairman of Warner Bros. Records, had insisted on reporting directly to Ross; after Ross died, in late 1992, Ostin and Morgado had clashed. "Morgado does not have a feel for a creative business," Ostin explained recently. "He is not from show business."



Mo Ostin complained that Warner Music Group chairman Robert Morgado "is not from show business." But Morgado thought he could control the newly promoted Doug Morris.

GERALD SCARFE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Indeed, Morgado had been the chief of staff for Governor Hugh Carey before being hired by Ross, in 1982. A man of unmistakable intelligence—even his detractors will acknowledge that—Morgado is also rather impersonal, and somewhat bland. He tends to show the most emotion when he is describing his strategic plan for the Warner Music Group, using terms like "manifest destiny" and "leverage" and, especially, "vertical integration." Morgado sees a future in which the labels take full advantage of the group's size by working together—just the opposite of the Steve Ross philosophy, which had been to let them compete. Unfortunately, not all the veteran record men at the labels, who had risen up under Ross, shared Morgado's dream—not Bob Krasnow, who ran Elektra Records, and certainly not Mo Ostin.

Morgado therefore needed a strong, credible ally to help him overcome the labels' resistance, and he believed he had found that ally in Doug Morris, the co-chairman of Atlantic Records, who had begun as a songwriter and record producer. (Morris had co-written "Sweet Talkin' Guy," a 1966 hit for the Chiffons, and had produced "Smokin' in the Boys Room" for Brownsville Station seven years later.) Though Morris was perhaps not held in as high esteem by the industry as Mo Ostin, he was indisputably a record man. Last July, Morgado promoted Morris to a new position, just below him, in which he would oversee with him all the American labels; within a month, Ostin resigned.

Morgado's victory was short-lived, however, because he soon found himself facing down a new adversary: Doug Morris. After promoting Morris to a position of leadership, Morgado had steadily chipped away at his ability to lead. Finally, Morris felt he had been left without any authority at all; and at that point he marshalled his forces in the record group at the Central Park West apartment, in a dramatic, and fateful, attempt to win his authority back.

ROBERT MORGADO has never claimed to be a record man, or even to know much about music. There is no stereo in his office. He is fifty-one, about five feet nine, and dark complexioned, with a broad face and a grin that reminds one of the Cheshire cat. A native of Honolulu, he is the son of an immigrant Portuguese father and a Polynesian mother. On a recent afternoon, Morgado talked to a reporter about his long-range plans for the Warner Music Group. He was wearing a blue button-down shirt with a monogram, and, as he spoke, he took sips from a pint bottle of Évian and distractedly tore off its label.

Morgado rarely gives interviews, and acknowledges that he suffers from an image problem. It upsets him to read continually that he has a background in politics; as he sees it, his career was in public service. After earning a master's degree from the graduate school of public affairs at SUNY at Albany, in 1965, he worked as a budget and financial analyst with the New York State Legislature; in 1975, he became an aide to Governor Carey, and two years later he was appointed the Governor's chief of staff. Steve Ross, the head of what was then called Warner Communications, which had its headquarters in New York, had been a fund-raiser for the Governor, and just before Carey left office, in 1982, Ross made Morgado his special assistant.

Four months later, Warner Communications experienced the biggest crisis in its history: the bottom fell out of its Atari unit, which made video games, and Warner's stock price dropped nearly seventeen points in one day. Desperate to reduce corporate overhead, Ross selected Morgado to eliminate as many jobs as possible, thereby earning Morgado the epithet of "hatchet man." "Steve knew that we had to downsize, and he was looking for someone to make it happen," Morgado says. "He asked me."

In 1985, Ross appointed Morgado a senior executive, with responsibility for Warner's recorded music and music publishing. The appointment came as no great shock to the labels. Ross had given similar responsibilities to David Horowitz, one of four members of his Office of the President (since disbanded), and Horowitz had not tried to meddle in the day-to-day affairs of the labels. Morgado, like Horowitz, was viewed mainly as a liaison between the labels and the corporation. But in 1990, shortly after Warner Communications merged with Time, Inc., to create Time Warner, all the domestic and foreign labels were assembled under a new corporate shell, the Warner Music Group, to be headed by Morgado; two years later,

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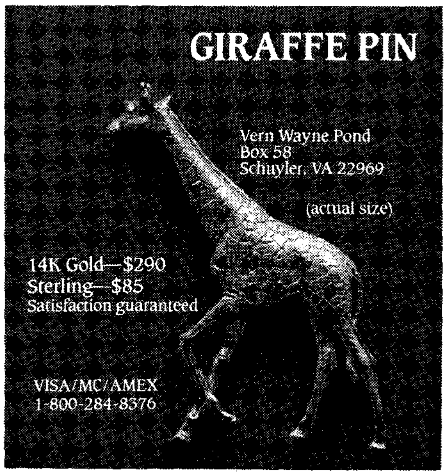

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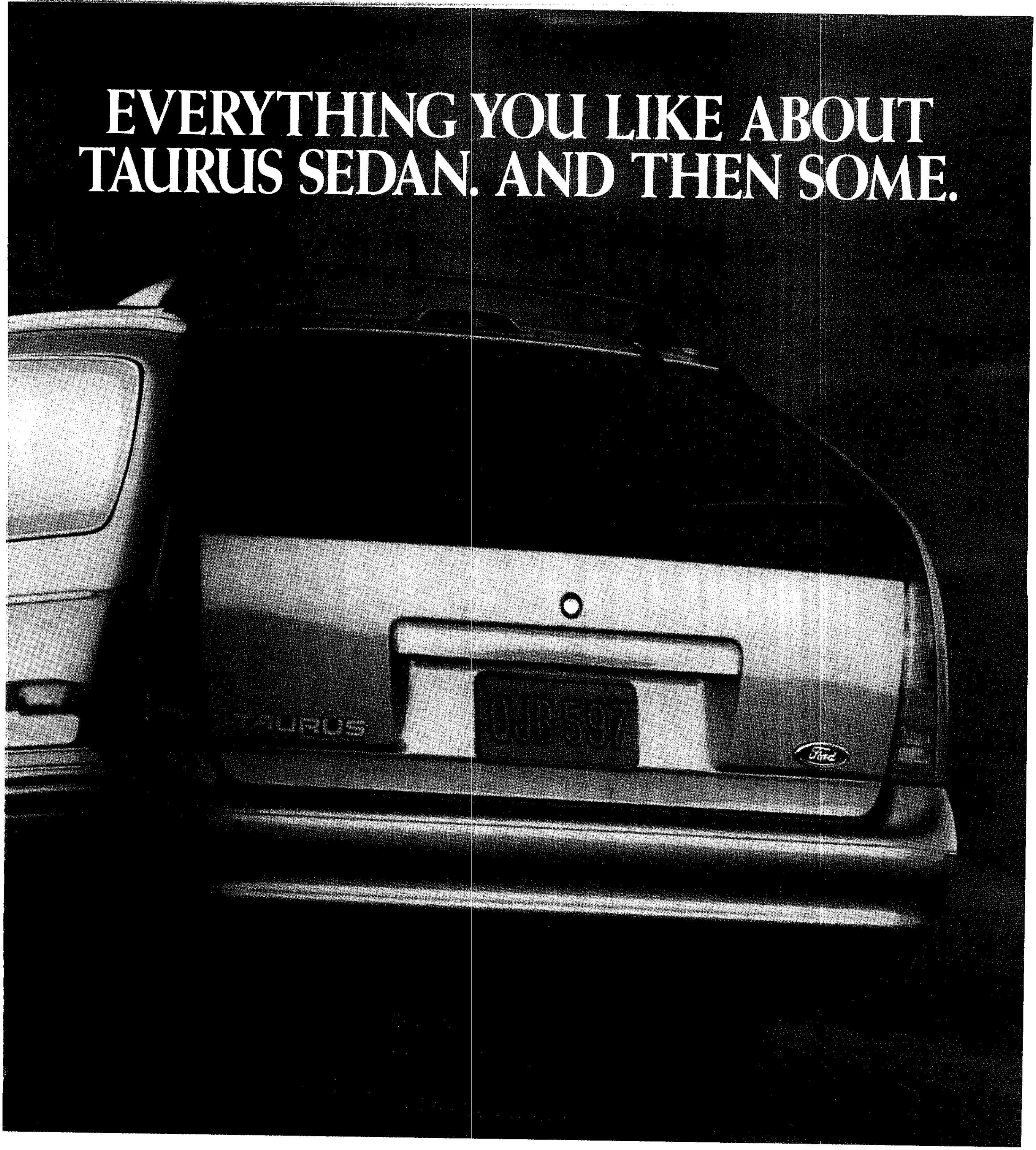

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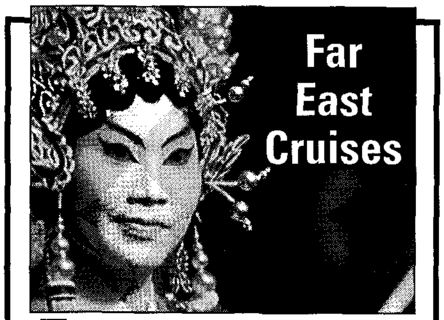

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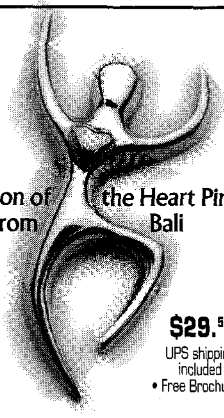

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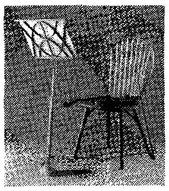

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Ross died of cancer. Ross's successor, Gerald M. Levin, appeared to have taken a liking to Morgado, and gave him his full backing.

It was not hard to see why: under Morgado, the labels' results had been excellent. Since 1985, the combined revenues of the labels had risen from around nine hundred million dollars to $3.3 billion last year. The group's 1993 earnings, of $296 million, surpassed those of every other Time Warner division except cable television. The Warner labels have consistently led the industry in United States market share; for the first ten months of this year, Warner had 22.2 per cent of the market, compared with 15.3 per cent for Sony Music, its nearest competitor.

Ostin and other veteran record men within Warner were fiercely proud of these results but were annoyed that Morgado should take any credit for them. After all, Morgado had entered the record business the same year that the compact disk began to take off, and it was that change which had given the industry its first significant price increases in years; worldwide industry revenues had climbed in less than a decade from about twelve billion dollars to about thirty billion. Without a doubt, though, Morgado deserved credit for building the record company's presence in Europe and Latin America, partly through acquisition. More than half of Warner Music's revenues now come from overseas, and Morgado believes that the ratio can go even higher; he sees Asia as the next frontier. "I sit here and see a market of two hundred million Indonesians, and somehow I know that's gonna be an important business for us," he says.

Morgado's strategy is to strengthen the company through vertical integration—the concept of reducing one's dependence on others and increasing one's control, as happens when, say, a paper manufacturer buys forest land. Last spring, Morgado invited four of the five other major record companies and Ticketmaster to join him in creating an alternative music-video channel to MTV; to his dismay, the Justice Department is investigating whether the plan violates antitrust laws.

THE man Morgado saw as the biggest obstacle to his plan to unify the labels is short and slight, bald, and given to wearing a sports jacket with an open shirt collar. Mo Ostin was born in New York in 1927 but grew up in Los Angeles. In 1954, four years after graduating from U.C.L.A. with an honors degree in economics, Ostin joined Verve, a jazz label, as controller, but, he says, did a little of everything—sales, marketing, finance, and A. & R., or artists and repertoire. In 1960, Frank Sinatra, having grown disgruntled with Capitol Records, where he'd made records for eight years, created his own label, Reprise, to put out his recordings and, subsequently, those of Sammy Davis, Jr., Dean Martin, and other mainstream pop singers. "Frank hired me the first time I met him, and made me the head of his company," Ostin says. Three years later, Reprise merged with Warner Bros. Records, an adjunct to the Burbank movie studio. Though Sinatra had little use for rock music, Ostin took an early interest in it, and following the merger he signed the Kinks and Jimi Hendrix. After more than two decades, he was still signing rock acts: in 1990, he pursued and got the Red Hot Chili Peppers.

Morgado faults Ostin for the bad blood between them. He recalls, "Mo would say to me, 'This is not personal—but you shouldn't really exist. We don't need you.' "

"I've never said anything like that," Ostin says. "But I did have a problem with Morgado with respect to reportage. My contract clearly defined that I reported either to Steve Ross or to his successor. I negotiated very, very hard for that point. . . . I had been dealt with by Steve Ross as an executive who had a lot of autonomy, who ran this company as if it were my own business. And the results were just fantastic. Bob Morgado came from a totally different management place. He was a guy who came out of politics—power, control, and things of that sort were very important to him. And he attempted to control me, and I felt that that was not the proper way in which we could relate to one another."

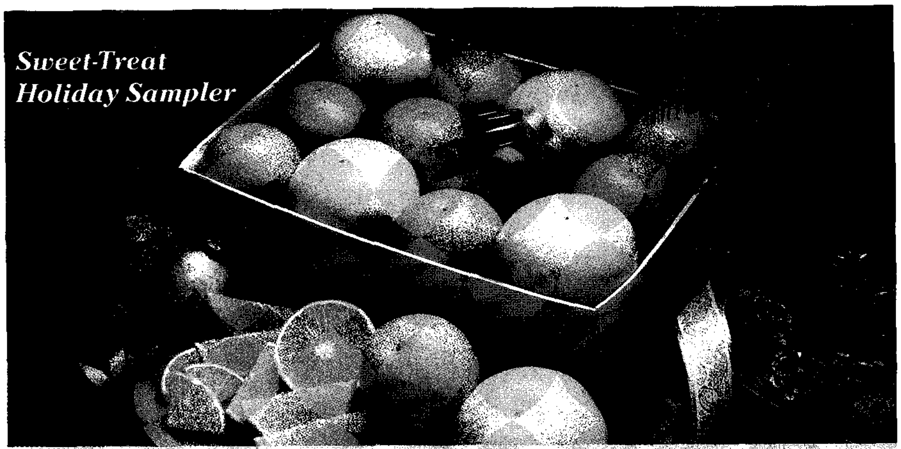
Morgado acknowledged that under Ostin's contract Ostin "technically" reported to the head of Time Warner. "But what does that mean?" he said. "It had no concrete manifestation in a day-to-day sense, because his business reported to me. People like to hang on to words."

Clearly, though, Ostin was a threat to Morgado's authority. "I was perfectly happy to deal with him in his coördinative and liaison capacity in the record group," Ostin says. "I just didn't want him to interfere in my business."

THE Time Warner Building, at 75 Rockefeller Plaza, where Morgado has his office, is also home to Warner's two large East Coast labels, Atlantic and Elektra, and Morgado had plenty of opportunity to observe the managers of those labels at work. One person who stood out was Atlantic's president, Doug Morris—the man who had written "Sweet Talkin' Guy." Morris, who still keeps a piano in his office, is fifty-four, compactly built, with a trim beard and a pronounced New York accent. (He grew up in Woodmere, Long Island.) He is gregarious and nurturing; his personality is altogether different from Bob Morgado's. "Doug is the kind of guy who calls all his top executives every Friday, wishes them a good weekend, and tells them what geniuses they are," Danny Goldberg, one of those executives, says.

Within Atlantic, Morris had his own nurturing boss in Ahmet Ertegun, the label's co-founder and chairman, who was as much an industry legend as Mo Ostin. The son of a Turkish ambassador, Ertegun had helped launch Atlantic in 1947 to record rhythm-and-blues artists like Ray Charles and, later on, Aretha Franklin; by the seventies, he had turned Atlantic into a rock label, with the Rolling Stones and Led Zeppelin. He had got to know Doug Morris in 1974, when Atlantic made a distribution deal for Big Tree, a small label that Morris had founded; Atlantic bought Big Tree four years later, and in 1980 Ertegun named Morris the president of Atlantic. Ertegun has nothing but praise for Morris. "Of all the people I've worked with, he's the straightest person I've ever known," he says. "He does not have what the French call *arrière-pensées*—hidden thoughts. It's incredible, but in all the years I've been with Doug we have never had an argument and we have never left the office without hugging one another."

By 1990, the year Morgado was promoted to his current post, Atlantic had been in decline for some time. Ertegun was now approaching seventy; the days when he courted the Rolling Stones aboard the Warner corporate jet were behind him. Atlantic's annual revenues had flattened to about three hundred and fifty million dollars, and most of that amount



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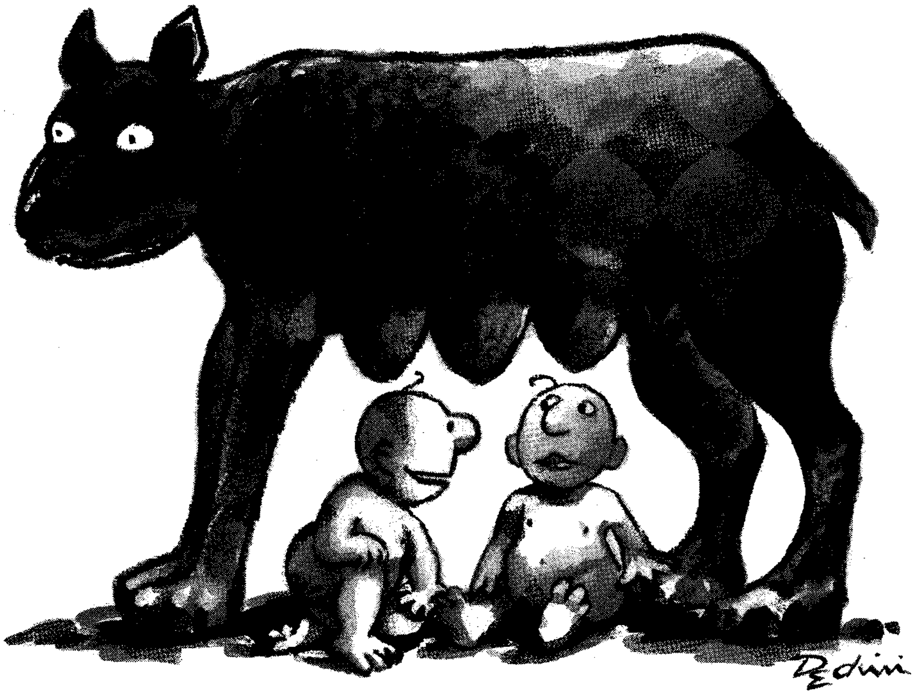
came from "catalogue"—the sale of old recordings by bands like Genesis and Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young. Ertegun acknowledged the need for a succession plan, and, unlike other veteran record men in the Warner Music Group, he put up little resistance to Morgado; in fact, he agreed with Morgado that there were competitive advantages to be gained from unifying the labels. In November of 1990, with Ertegun's blessing, Bob Morgado elevated Doug Morris to co-chairman of Atlantic.

Morris and Morgado seemed to like each other well enough, but the bond really linking them was one of mutual usefulness. Morris's promotion reflected well on Morgado. This year, the rechristened Atlantic Group is expected to report sales of a billion dollars. Though some of the growth has come from non-musical businesses—notably exercise videos—most of it has come from new hit records. In 1990, Morris gambled millions of dollars of Atlantic's money as a twenty-five-per-cent investor in Interscope Records, a new label created by the record producer Jimmy Iovine and the retail heir Ted Field. Though Iovine had produced and engineered albums by John Lennon, Bruce Springsteen, and U2, he had no track record as a businessman, and until Morris came along he could not find a backer. "No one would give me a deal," Iovine says. "But Doug did." Interscope has since become the hottest independent label in the United States, with multiplatinum albums by the rappers Snoop Doggy Dogg and Dr. Dre and the alternative-rock band Nine Inch Nails. Interscope is expected to gross over a hundred million dollars domestically this year.

Morris also recruited new executive talent to Atlantic. In 1992, he persuaded Danny Goldberg, an artist's manager whose clients included Bonnie Raitt and Nirvana, to run Atlantic's West Coast office; this past January, Goldberg was promoted to president of the label and subsequently moved to New York. Goldberg, who is forty-four, is nasal-voiced, slightly nerdy, and well known for involvement in liberal causes: he has been active in the A.C.L.U., and he co-produced and co-directed the "No Nukes" concert film. Kurt Cobain, the lead singer of Nirvana, who committed suicide earlier this year, had referred to Goldberg as his "spiritual father." Goldberg, in his two years at Atlantic, has brought in at least three hot new acts: the singer-songwriters Juliana Hatfield and Liz Phair, and the hugely successful alternative-rock band Stone Temple Pilots. For the first six months of 1994, Atlantic outperformed Warner Bros.—an achievement that just a few years ago would have been considered impossible.

Then, on July 11, 1994, Morgado promoted Doug Morris again, to president and chief operating officer of Warner Music–U.S., a newly created holding



"Food, drink, shelter—what else is there?"

company for all the American labels. Ertegun gave the move his benediction, but over at Elektra its chairman, Bob Krasnow—another veteran who had clashed with Morgado—appeared to take the appointment as an affront. He resigned the next day.

Morgado and Morris immediately had a problem on their hands with Metallica, a speed-metal band on Elektra that was one of the most successful acts within the Warner Music Group. Since 1984, when Krasnow signed Metallica to its original contract with Elektra, the band had produced four studio albums that had together sold about eighteen million copies in the United States. The band members and their managers, Cliff Burnstein and Peter Mensch, had had an excellent relationship with Krasnow and were upset over his leaving. They were even more upset because a deal that they claimed had been negotiated with Krasnow in May—a joint venture that would give the band fifty-per-cent ownership of its master recordings—had not gone to contract.

About a week after Morris's promotion, a meeting was held in a conference room of the Time Warner Building to discuss a new deal for Metallica. Burnstein and Mensch came dressed in their usual jeans and sneakers, and were met by Morgado, Morris, and two lawyers. The managers had an uneasy history with Doug Morris: they had previously managed the band AC/DC on Atlantic, and Morris had barred them from the building for a time for badmouthing the label. But at the meeting, which lasted about half an hour, Morgado did all the talking. He explained that a joint venture was out of the question, and that Warner Music preferred to assume the risk, implying that the company would offer a large advance. An offer was made a few days later: about twenty million dollars for four new albums and a box set of the band's greatest hits. "We almost had to laugh," Burnstein says. "After all that pontification about 'We want to take the risk'! The way we calculate it, if we never made a new record, they'd recoup that money just on catalogue sales."

Before long, Metallica filed suit in California, where the band is based, to be released from its existing contract. Warner in turn filed suit in New York against the band for a hundred million dollars in damages for anticipated breach of contract—an unusual hardball tactic for a

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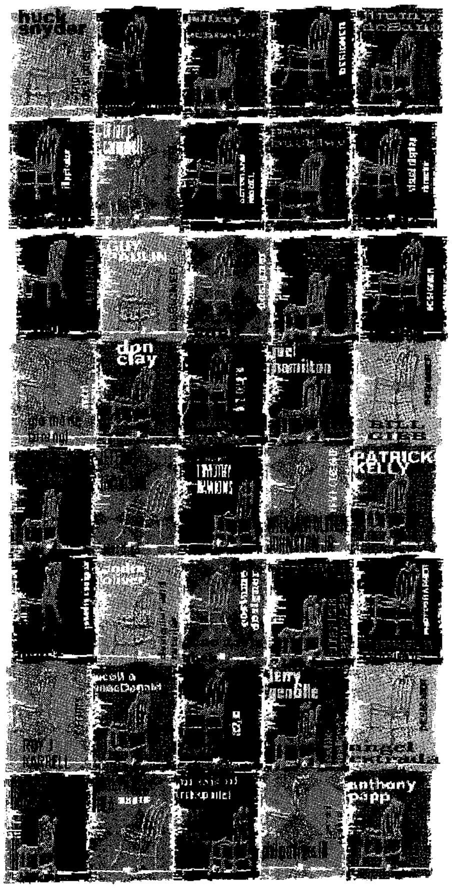

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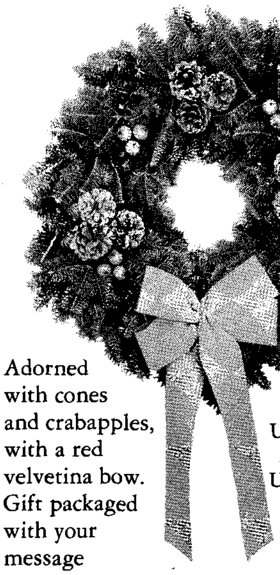

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record company to take against its musicians. Lars Ulrich, the band's drummer, publicly vilified Morgado, calling him "greedy and arrogant." The litigation is still pending.

THE appointment of Doug Morris did not sit well at Warner Bros. Records, in Burbank. Though Mo Ostin says he likes Morris, the notion of having to answer to an industry figure lesser than himself must have galled him, and Ostin acknowledges that he has "confronted" Morris for being unduly boastful about the turnaround at Atlantic. "Except for the first six months of this year, Warner has consistently outperformed Atlantic in market share and profit contribution," Ostin says. "And, since we're in a business of the arts, one also has to look at the quality of the music you put out. If you look at the Grammy Awards as one example and compare Warner and Atlantic, that will tell you a lot. Just no contest."

Warner Bros. Records endured a long cold spell until recently, when big hits by two new groups, Green Day and Candlebox, and new releases by Madonna, Eric Clapton, and R.E.M. put the label back at the top of the charts. Ostin deeply resents the suggestion that Warner Bros. Records has become too reliant on its old acts, and is happy to recite a long list of emerging talent, in addition to Green Day and Candlebox, on the active roster.

Morgado says that he became concerned about the cold spell at Warner around the time he promoted Morris to head Warner Music–U.S. "I wanted Doug to work with them," he said. "I didn't know what the problem was. Did they have the wrong A. & R. people? I thought Doug would have a better spin."

The final blowup between Ostin and Morgado came over the issue of succession. Ostin turned sixty-seven this year, but he is in excellent health and is in no mood to retire from the business. "Mo was there from the beginning, and he wasn't quite prepared to accept that there does come a time when you've got to build the next generation," Morgado said. "He was quite happy to go on another three years, and then worry about the transition after that. I didn't think that was right."

Ostin calls that statement absurd. Within Warner Bros., he says, everyone had known for years that he was grooming an eventual successor in Lenny Waronker. Waronker, who is fifty-two, is a shy, soft-spoken Los Angeles native who began producing records for Warner Bros. in 1966; among his credits are albums by Randy Newman and Ry Cooder. He advanced into A. & R., and in 1982 Ostin made him the president of Warner Bros. Records. Morgado said he had doubts, however, that Waronker possessed the management skills to run a record label. "That's because Morgado is hung up on form and structure instead of substance," Ostin says. "The most important thing any record executive can do is sign and develop artists. And in that department Lenny is as good as they come."

Last spring, Ostin was offered a new three-year contract, which would have kept him on as chairman of Warner Bros. through the end of 1998. The contract specified that he would have to report to Morgado. "I stuck it in a drawer," Ostin says. "There were pressures put on me, and I just could not get myself to sign that document. I did not feel I could be happy if I continued under the new set of circumstances. In fact, I felt I would be miserable. And when I came to the realization that I could let go—which was very, very painful for me, after all the years I had put in—and I addressed the idea of leaving, I almost felt a sense of relief."

On August 15th, in a letter to the staff of Warner Bros., Ostin wrote, "I am neither resigning nor retiring. I am, however, moving on." As of January 1, 1995, he would become a consultant to Time Warner's chairman, Gerald Levin, for an unspecified period. The news that Mo Ostin, the Great Record Man, had been forced to leave Warner Bros. before his time—that was how the industry took it—was greeted with a degree of outrage that must have come as a surprise to Morgado. For all Morgado's doubts about Lenny Waronker, it was Waronker who saved him from even greater opprobrium, by agreeing to take over as chairman when Ostin left the label.

Around this time, Morris began to encounter serious difficulties with Morgado. The two men were deadlocked over Interscope, the hot independent label created by Jimmy Iovine and Ted Field which Morris had gambled on. Atlantic was still a minority shareholder in Interscope, and Morris was anxious to exercise a buyout option to acquire the label from Iovine and Field. Under the terms of the agreement, after a certain

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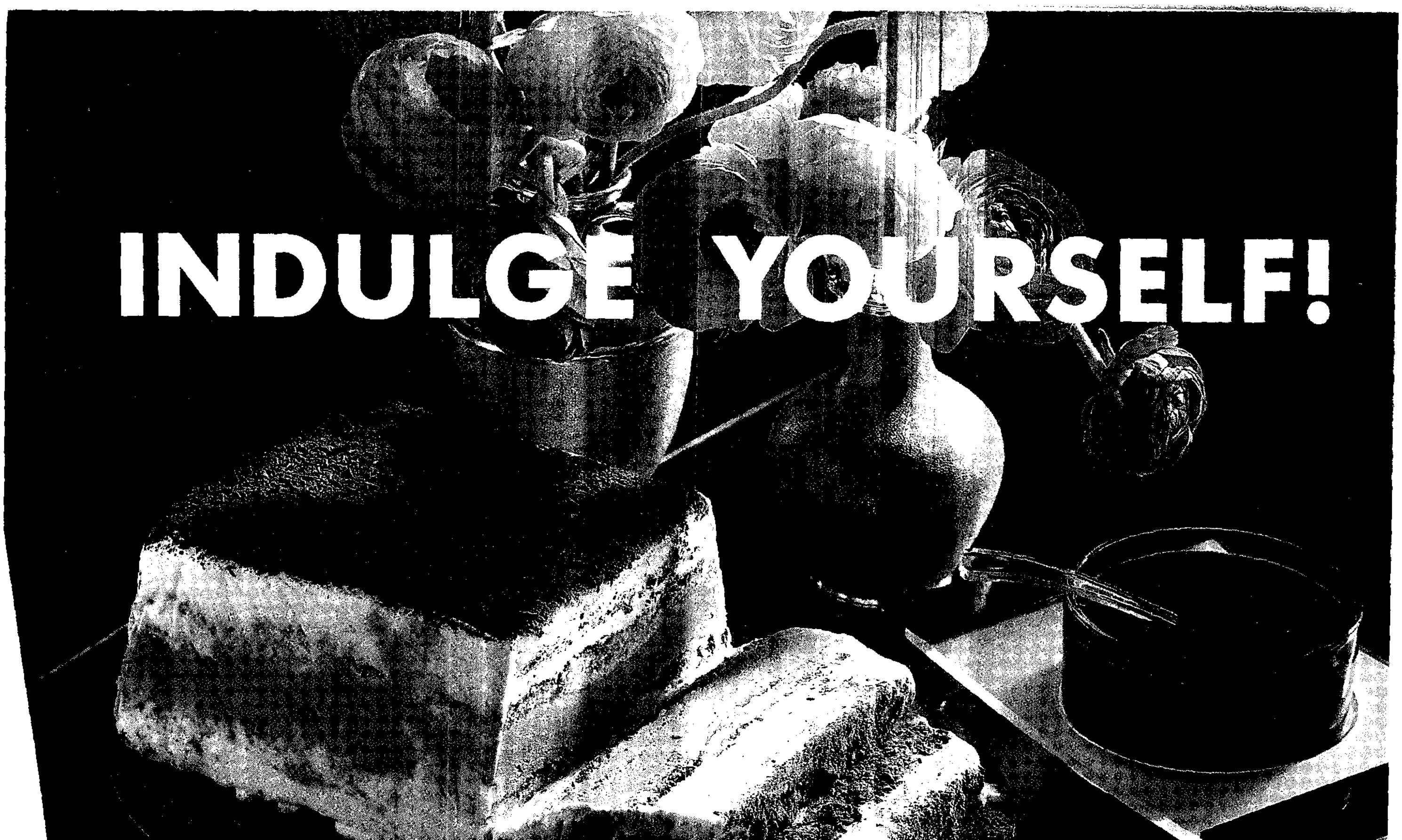

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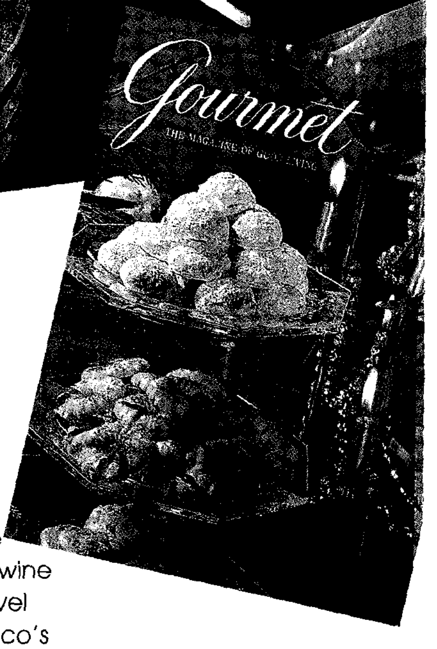

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date Interscope could solicit outside bids, and unless Atlantic was willing to match the highest bid it would be forced to sell its shares. Morris was fearful that Sony or PolyGram would snatch the label away, but Morgado was hesitant about approving the asking price for the outstanding shares; according to industry rumor, Iovine and Field valued their company at three hundred million dollars. (Iovine will not confirm the figure, but says, "I'm not gonna sit here and be coy and say I don't want to make a fortune.") Morgado did agree to let Interscope solicit bids early, as a way to establish a market price, but then, inexplicably—and without consulting Morris—he threatened to litigate if any other company actually tried to purchase Interscope. Morris was horrified; Morgado's heavy-handedness was sure to antagonize Iovine and Field, and might even destroy Atlantic's chances of acquiring the label. (By last week, no deal with Interscope had been struck.)

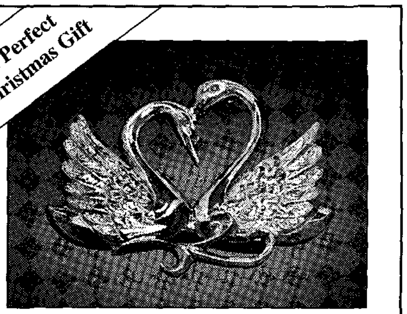
Soon Morris was in for another shock. For four years, *Entertainment Weekly*, a magazine published by Time Warner, had compiled an annual list of what it calls the "Power 101"—the most influential people in movies, television, music, books, and video. Each person on the list merits a photograph or an illustration and a résumé. As the fifth annual survey was going to press, in mid-October, a fact-checker for the magazine called Morgado's office. Mary Kaye Schilling, the senior editor in charge of the Power 101 issue, says that the staff was particularly concerned about Morgado, because the previous year the magazine had made an error in his entry. But the checker inadvertently revealed that Morgado was to share his spot on the list with Doug Morris; Schilling says that Morgado's press representative told her that Morgado would find it "insulting" to be ranked equally with Morris. She adds, "It was eleven at night, and Jim Seymore"—the managing editor—"just said 'Fuck it' and took Morris out. It was a mistake to give in to the publicist." Morris was badly shaken by this latest humiliation.

The last thing that Warner Music needed now was more trouble, but on Monday, October 24th, Lenny Waronker suddenly reversed his earlier decision to succeed Mo Ostin as chairman of Warner Bros. Records. In his own letter to the staff, Waronker said that he would continue to serve as president under his current contract, which expires at the end of next year, and that he would "help in the transition." The meaning was clear: Waronker was going to quit the company.

Immediately, a number of top Warner acts that had been signed by Ostin and Waronker, among them Tom Petty, Neil Young, R.E.M., and Eric Clapton, publicly protested the imminent departure of Waronker, and blamed corporate management in New York. The members of R.E.M., whose new album, "Monster," had had its début at No. 1, and who had only one album left on their contract, hinted that they were shopping for a new label. An air of panic set in. "Everyone was saying that the company was spinning out of control," Morgado recalled.

ON Wednesday, October 26th, Morris had the first of several tense conversations with Morgado. A new successor to Ostin would have to be brought in rapidly to restore order, but there was no clear candidate. A week earlier, Morris had summoned from London the chairman of Warner Music U.K., a man named Rob Dickins. Dickins has a reputation for being one of the most arrogant and imperious people in the music business. Though he is now only forty-four years old, he had been in charge of operations in the United Kingdom for eleven years, and he made no secret of his ambition to run Warner Bros. Records. After interviewing Dickins, however, Morris had some serious doubts about whether he was the right man for the job. Now Morgado was pressuring Morris to change his mind.

The principal topic of the two men's ongoing disagreement, however, was whether Doug Morris had any real authority—in the light of the incidents involving Interscope and *Entertainment Weekly*, it appeared that his job was meaningless. As the day wore on, the last traces of civility between Morgado and Morris began to break down. Around midday, Time Warner's chairman, Gerald Levin, dropped by Morgado's office for a few minutes. Levin had had his own problems recently: Time Warner stock was trading near its one-year low, in part because of regulatory issues that might adversely affect the company's cable-television unit, but also because of continuing concerns about the quality of management at the company following the death of Steve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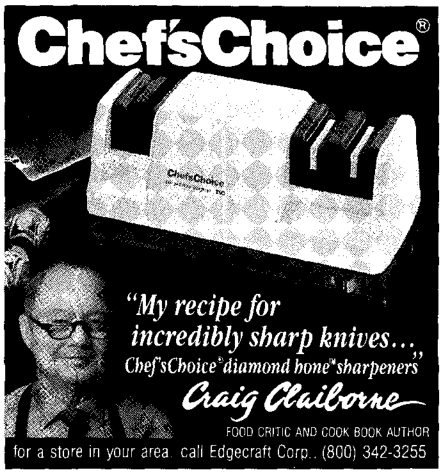
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Ross. Levin brusquely told Morgado and Morris that they must settle their differences, or he would have to step in and settle them himself. Hours later, however, Morgado and Morris were still at an impasse.

Even though Morris had officially been promoted to president and chief operating officer of Warner Music–U.S. in July, he had yet to sign his employment contract. In utter frustration, Morris had been offering to return the contract unsigned and go back to Atlantic Records. By ten that evening, Morris had left the Time Warner Building and returned home; Morgado called him to say that the offer to go back to Atlantic was accepted. Around midnight, Morgado phoned Morris again, to tell him that he had called Rob Dickins in London and given him the chairmanship of Warner Bros. Records.

Shortly after the first call from Morgado, Morris began to phone people he considered to be his loyalists, to tell them he had just been demoted. He called Ahmet Ertegun, Danny Goldberg, and Mel Lewinter, the executive vice-president of Warner Music–U.S. Before the night was over, the news had been broken to six other loyalists: Sylvia Rhone, formerly of Atlantic, whom Morris had appointed chairman of Elektra to replace Bob Krasnow; Val Azzoli, the general manager of Atlantic Records; Stuart Hersch, the chief executive of A*Vision, the home-video and television unit of the Atlantic Group; Jason Flom, the senior vice-president of A. & R. at Atlantic; Tony O'Brien, the Atlantic Group's chief financial officer; and Ina Meibach, the executive vice-president of the Atlantic Group. All nine loyalists agreed to meet with Morris the next morning at Hersch's apartment.

At about 1 A.M. London time on Thursday, October 27th, Rob Dickins got a call from Morgado's office instructing him to take the next Concorde to New York. Dickins caught the 10:30 A.M. flight out of Heathrow, which arrives in New York at ten-twenty the same morning. By a remarkable coincidence, Dickins found himself seated next to Steve Stewart, who is the manager of the Stone Temple Pilots, an Atlantic group. "He was in good spirits and very excited," Stewart says of Dickins. "We talked about real estate in Burbank." On arriving in New York, Dickins checked into a room at the Carlyle. He sat and waited for the phone call from Morgado's office that would summon him to Rockefeller Plaza for his anointment and the press conference that was sure to follow.

Dickins did not know it, but Morris was then back in Morgado's office, still arguing. Meanwhile, Morris's loyalists had gathered at the Hersch apartment, and their emotions ran high. Was Morgado really demoting Doug or just calling his bluff? Finally, the group discussed consulting lawyers to explore all possible options, including early release from their employment contracts. Morris arrived at the apartment as the meeting was about to break up; according to one of the attendees, he said, "Let's have some salmon and get back to work."

Morris returned to his office, and a short time later he got a message from Morgado: the appointment of Dickins was on hold, and Morgado was prepared to try to resolve the problem of his own and Morris's overlapping responsibilities. Morgado had caved in, and Morris and his loyalists are not sure to this day exactly why, but some of them suspect that Gerald Levin had made good on his threat to intervene; he had spoken on the phone to several of the loyalists and was aware of their discontent. (Levin declined several interview requests for this account. Morgado will not discuss any details of his dispute with Morris, maintaining that it has been "blown way out of proportion.") By afternoon, Morgado had issued a statement of four brief paragraphs, to reassure the company and the news media that rumors of disharmony between him and Morris were "merely speculation" and "without merit." In the fourth paragraph, he made a passing reference to "Warner Music–U.S. chairman and CEO Doug Morris, who is responsible for Warner Music Group's U.S. recorded-music operations." Morris's title had been president; without actually announcing it, Morgado had just given him a promotion.

Rob Dickins was still sitting by the phone in his room at the Carlyle; he did not learn until around nine that evening that Morris had conclusively vetoed his appointment. One of the people who spoke to Dickins that day says, "He ran the gamut of emotions—from fear to disappointment to fury to revenge." Dickins flew back to London the next morning. Morgado said, "I'm extremely sympa-

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thetic, and I feel very bad about Rob. But Doug, if he is to do the job, has to have somebody he feels comfortable about working with."

By Tuesday, November 1st, it was official: the new chairman and C.E.O. of Warner Bros. Records was Kurt Cobain's "spiritual father" and Doug Morris's disciple—Danny Goldberg. After uprooting his wife, Rosemary Carroll, who is a top entertainment lawyer, and their young daughter earlier this year to move from Los Angeles to New York and become president of Atlantic, Goldberg was going to have to uproot them again and move them back to L.A. Meanwhile, Val Azzoli, the general manager of Atlantic, who is a Morris favorite, was promoted to Atlantic president; Ahmet Ertegun stayed on, as solo chairman.

Though Morgado still has authority over Warner Music's international division, publishing company, and record club, it is Morris, his nominal subordinate, who has the upper hand with the American labels. Now Warner Bros., Elektra, and Atlantic will be run by people who owe their allegiance to Morris. And because of his public schism with Morgado he does not even have to share in the blame for forcing out Ostin and Waronker and Krasnow. Instead, he gets to play the hero—the record man who defeated the ultimate corporate suit.

A FOOTNOTE: The dramatic events at the Warner Music Group did not go unremarked by a group of record-industry people who communicate hourly in a "dirt file" on America Online, the computer service. Most of the correspondents are anonymous—they use handles like Moosebrain and BondGirl and Knowbiz—but not all. Danny Goldberg is among the hackers who signs his name; recently he logged on to try to quell an improbable story that had been making the rounds. ("The rumor of Morgado and Morris coming to blows is totally untrue.") Mostly, though, the correspondents analyzed the events and debated the fate of the participants. "Morgado down, but not out," wrote Knowbiz. "Sky, however, is still very gray." A hacker known as Meannlean offered this observation: "It's no secret that Mo's status was a threat to Morgado's authority within the 'Time Warner' Music Group. . . . Isn't it ironic that through Morgado's efforts to gain control from Mo, he lost it to Doug?" ♦

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LETTER FROM PARIS

THE IMPRESARIO'S LAST ACT

Pierre Bergé became a formidable power by association: first as the business brains behind Yves Saint Laurent, then as President François Mitterrand's most loyal advocate. Now that Mitterrand is on his way out and Bergé has lost face over the Paris Opéra and a Saint Laurent stock sale, everyone is waiting to see the outcome.

BY JANE KRAMER

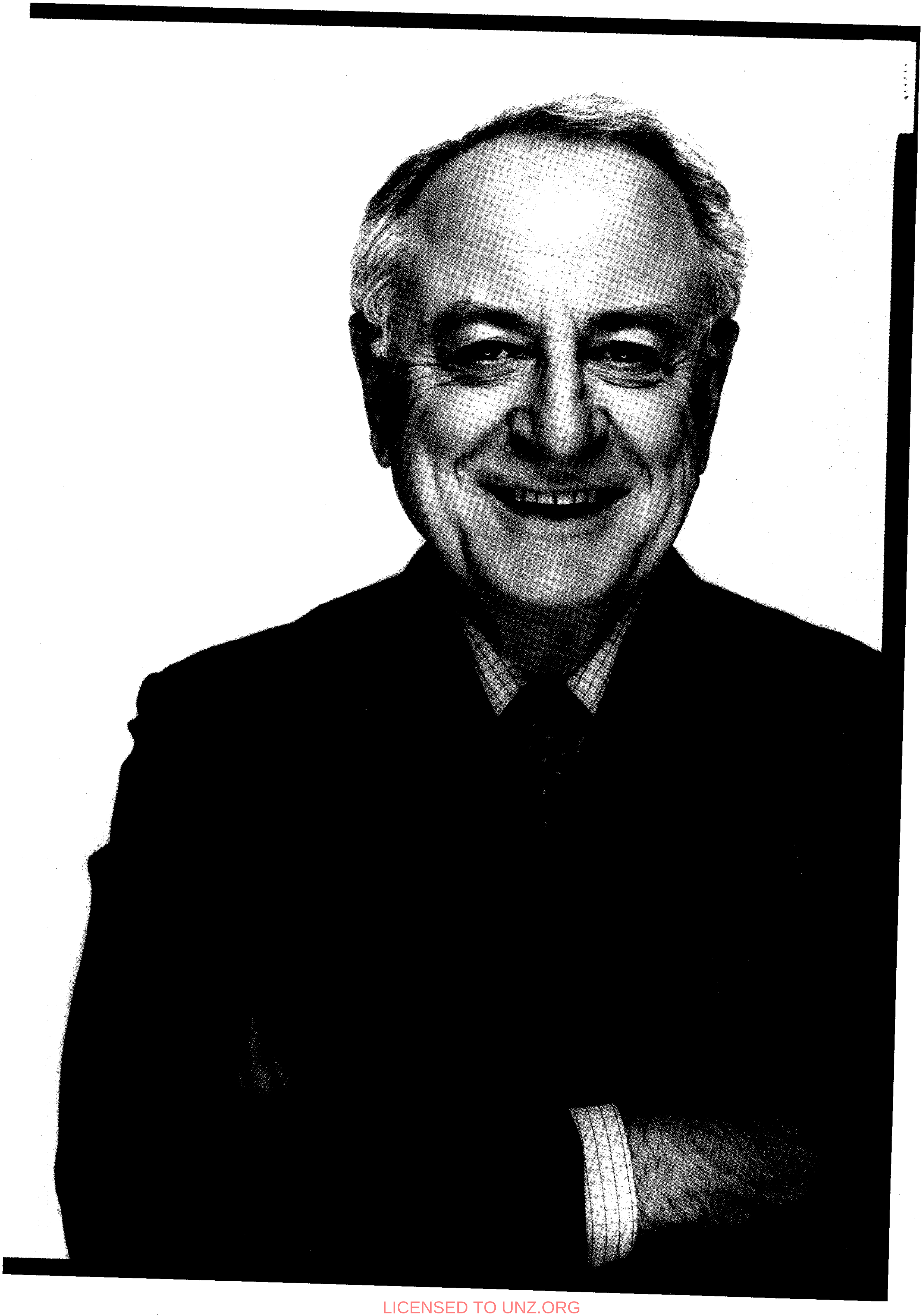
I HAVE heard it said that the story of Pierre Bergé begins as Balzac and ends as Saint-Simon: a young man, both rube and rainmaker, comes to the capital with a few francs and a lot of expectations; he makes his fortune; he stays to become the best friend of the President of France. Bergé is known abroad as the man who built the House of Yves Saint Laurent—the impresario of talent who fell in love with a skinny, neurasthenic boy, up from Oran, Algeria, and turned him into a new French empire. But in Paris he is known as an impresario of power, and he has built another kind of empire. The French call it *la gauche caviar*—the caviar left. Bergé is known to himself as a man of letters. He likes to say that he discovered his brother in François Mitterrand, reciting poetry at a campaign dinner party. His office vita, which used to begin with his title as president of Saint Laurent, now begins with his "interest in literature" and drops the names Giono, Cocteau, Camus, Sartre, and Aragon (one version adds Montherlant and Anouilh) before it even mentions the designer—making it, surely, the strangest vita in the annals of the cloak-and-suit trade. Bergé has always talked more about "literature" than about the company he founded for Saint Laurent and ran for over thirty years to their extraordinary profit. And he is in so many ways a creature of his own relentless invention that it is not surprising that people here use literature to describe him. Saint Laurent calls him Charlus, after the treacherous baron of Proust's "Recherche" (Saint Laurent calls himself Swann), and Karl Lagerfeld, who has known them both since they were starting out in Paris, says, wickedly but with some wisdom, that Bergé's life is "Greek tragedy on a commercial level."

By now, Bergé is one of the richest men in France and, given his intimacy with the President, one of the most powerful. But he is not one of the most loved. He has been accused by the press of profiting from the President's friendship: last year, he made a fortune selling the House of Yves Saint Laurent—its name, its "image," its clothes, its licenses, its lipsticks and perfumes—in a stock transfer with the pharmaceutical company Elf Sanofi, a publicly traded subsidiary of the state petroleum company, Elf Aquitaine, which happened to be run by another crony of Mitterrand's, Loïk Le Floch-Prigent. Bergé has been accused by some of his minority stockholders of profiting from their investment: a couple of days before the sale, he and his board diluted the value of everybody else's stock by voting themselves a gift of nearly nine per cent of the Saint Laurent capital. He has been accused by the French securities board of violating the stock-exchange laws and by the courts of insider trading: he unloaded about eighteen million dollars' worth of Saint Laurent stock, most of it the designer's own stock, in Switzerland four months before the sale and only ten days before a semiannual report disclosing heavy losses for the company drove the price of the stock down by more than a third. (Seventy-four per cent of the businessmen questioned in France in a Harris poll said they supported the investigation.)

Bergé's friends—many of whom are in his debt—say he has sacrificed himself for friendship. They describe him as faithful, generous, and kind, and they point, by way of example, to Saint Laurent—undone by drugs, booze, nerves and medicine for those nerves, and yet, thanks to Pierre Bergé and his ceaseless ministrations, still delivering some of the most beautiful clothes in Paris. His enemies—and he has made more enemies than friends—describe him as foul-tempered, mean-spirited, controlling, and vindictive, and *they* point out that the man who refers to himself as "the only couturier" is in many ways a martyr to Pierre Bergé's ambitions for the label and the image that bear his name. The House of Yves Saint Laurent may not be the House of Atreus, but it is certainly plagued by the furies of dependence and regret of two aging men who cannot untangle their destinies ("I can't imagine living without Yves," Bergé told me), though they have tried. Saint Laurent escapes into the psychiatric wing of the American Hospital; Bergé escapes into the Élysée. Saint Laurent is famously self-effacing; Bergé is famously overbearing. It is a quality he shares with the President. He has a lugubrious, rather terrifying self-regard and, like the President, he seems undisturbed by the tempering plain truths of self-reflection. The designer Sonia Rykiel, who likes him, calls this posturing "his touching, fragile part." Bergé is a tiny man, narrow-shouldered, with a barky voice and an unfortunate nose, and he often dresses, in the words of an ex-friend, "like a car salesman." It may be that he was never as much at home in the company of real clothes as he has been in François Mitterrand's hothouse court, where the emperor's new clothes are more Hans Christian Andersen than Yves Saint

PHOTOGRAPH BY RICHARD AVEDON

Pierre Bergé, Paris, October 6, 1994.

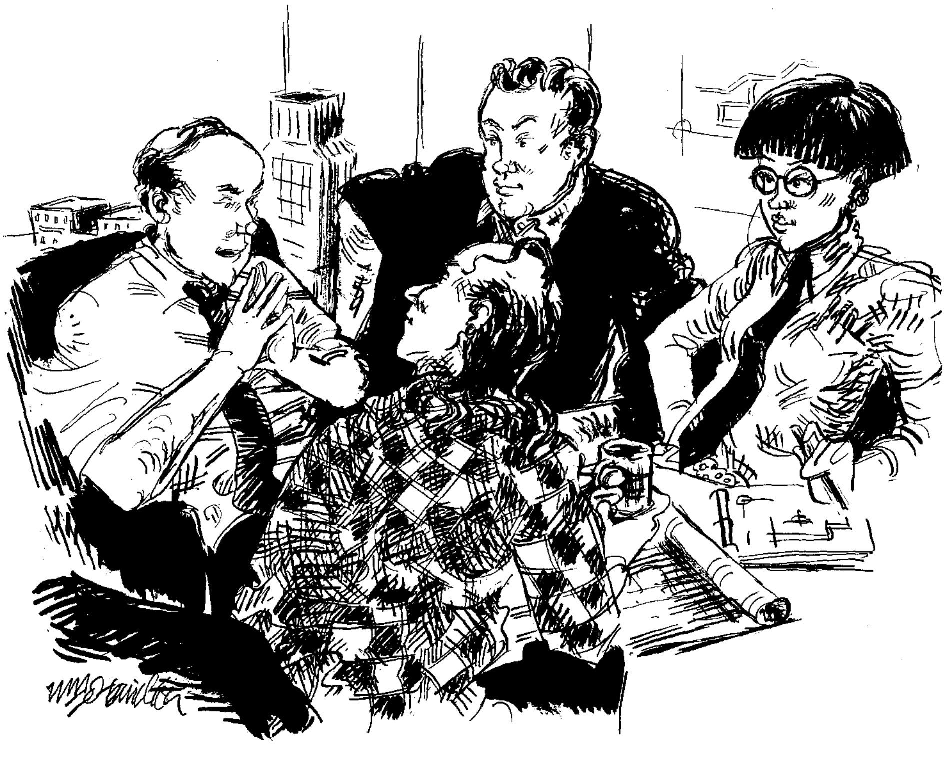


Laurent, and almost everybody wears them.

PARISIANS, of course, love clothes. Paris is the city where Charles Worth turned pricey dressmaking into la haute couture and Coco Chanel sold the image of the women who could pay for la haute couture to a perfume factory to "interpret." But it was Pierre Bergé who made the connection between high fashion and fashionable politics. It was Bergé who, inventing himself as an *homme de gauche*, a few years into the Mitterrand Presidency, took the thirty-thousand-dollar dress and turned it into a symbol of Socialist achievement. It was Bergé who saw to it that fashion shows were held in the Cour Carrée of the Louvre, and that the Louvre opened a Musée des Arts de la Mode, and that the Opéra-Bastille had an "homage to Yves Saint Laurent" on the order of an evening of Pavarotti singing Verdi's greatest hits. Clothes and textiles are the third-biggest business in France. (Twelve billion dollars in foreign sales is the official figure.) And it is in large part due to Pierre Bergé that the people who make clothes no longer speak of themselves as dress designers. The word is "artists" now, and they talk, like Yves, about "suffering" and "creation." It is also in large part due to Bergé that Parisians—sensitive to the absence of a new Picasso or Matisse in the city they have long been taught to believe is the center of Western art—have bought into a rhetoric that equates the balance of boot to hemline with the rhythms of "Guernica."

For all that, Bergé today is less a creature of Saint Laurent's reputation than of François Mitterrand's reputation, and, while Saint Laurent is looking up—last summer, he showed one of his best couture collections—Mitterrand is in the final six months of a Presidency that has lasted for almost fourteen years. He is dying of prostate cancer. He has been close to a series of ugly corruption scandals involving his Socialist friends. He has nearly destroyed the Socialists themselves by trying to destroy their party leader, Michel Rocard, who was once his Prime Minister and made the mistake of hoping to succeed him. (Mitterrand told his friends that his list of choices for a successor ended with "my dog, and then Rocard," and in the last European Parliament elections he officially abandoned Rocard, who was running at the head of a Socialist slate, and backed instead the slate of Bernard Tapie, a Marseilles millionaire in the manner of a Silvio Berlusconi, with a soccer team, a shadowy past, and demagogic leanings.) And he has finally acknowledged what some Frenchmen knew and many suspected—that, while he certainly ended the Second World War as a member of the Resistance, he spent a good part of it as an important Vichy official and even was decorated by Pétain for his services. In 1986, at the Élysée, he was still entertaining his friend René Bousquet, the Vichy police chief who organized the Jewish roundups, in 1942, that delivered thirty-three thousand Jews to Germany's death-camp trains. Mitterrand is clearly discredited now. His reputation—so cynically and single-mindedly pursued—has been reduced to a record, no better or worse than a lot of other politicians' records. And people like Bergé, who attached themselves to that reputation, have discovered, to their evident shock, that they are discredited with him. The French may be comically craven when it comes to power, but they are quite righteous when the powerful start to fall. "Bergé's problem," one of my French friends told me, "is that everyone feared him and now he knows that when Mitterrand goes no one will fear him. In France, you're never accountable until the whole thing blows."

Bergé today is desperately loyal to his patron. "I am a person who takes sides," he told me. "I detest what you call 'objectivity.' " It does not much matter to him that Mitterrand himself has a problem with loyalty. Bergé is willing to take on the world to defend him. He hectors the French about Mitterrand—on television, in newspapers, and in a weekly column he writes for a magazine called *Globe Hebdo*, which he happens to control and which, according to its editor, Georges-Marc Benamou, "is committed to Mitterrand by a pact of political friendship." (They stopped publishing in August, redesigned the magazine, and are raising money to start over by December.) Bergé sells the President's image the way he always sold Saint Laurent's image, with contempt for the nonbelievers. It did not do much for his own image when a book about Socialist scams and scandals appeared earlier this year, and people learned that *Globe*, moonlighting for the Party, had been paid handsomely for publishing campaign literature and organizing appearances for candidates. The bills, over the course of two campaigns, amounted to more than three hundred thousand dollars, and listed, among other services, "styling," and the money came from a Party slush fund distributed through government "research institutes" and think tanks. Benamou says, "The Socialists


"Remember, we're not just making money. We're building prisons."

asked us to do something for them. It was a little incestuous but not illegal."

IT was de Gaulle, not Mitterrand, who said "*La France, c'est moi*," but Bergé is right in the General's style when he writes his column. He seems to believe that he is France, and he has taken up what could be called the imperial "I" in his own name and for his own interests. Karl Lagerfeld, who likes Bergé "three zillion times more" than Saint Laurent and reads him every week "for the amusement," says he counted twenty-two "I"s and "me"s in one short column designed to dispatch Michel Rocard to the footnotes of history. (I counted fourteen, but the point was taken.) Bergé writes a florid, didactic, exclamatory, me-me prose, which his friends describe as "in the nineteenth-century French essay tradition," but which I would compare to having a finger wagged at you when you are trying to read. He savors his prose. He repeats it often in his conversations—he begins a lot of his sentences with "*Moi!*" or "*Voilà!*" for emphasis, and ends them with "*Moi!*" or "*Voilà!*" for emphasis—and sometimes he actually repeats it word for word, including the asides. His friends say that the great disappointment of his life, the thing that makes him "sensitive" (they mean aggressive), is not being an artist himself but always the man and manager behind the artist, and that it does not much matter if the artist is Saint Laurent or an artist of politics, like Mitterrand. They say he is haunted by being a footnote of history himself, and that, short of writing a great French life (he tried, once, with a book about the novelist Jean Giono, and gave it up), he is determined to *live* a great French life. They mean a life of influence. France is a country with what could be called an intellectual-industrial-political complex—a country where writers talk about money but businessmen, if they are interested in power, talk about freedom and "the civilization" and the rights of man. Perhaps what distinguishes Bergé from the other businessmen is simply that Bergé came to believe inordinately in what he said. He barked out opinions about Bosnia or John Paul II or Jean Genet as if he were Al Capone laying on a hit. Three years ago, he published his opinions about himself. The book was called "Liberté, J'Écris Ton Nom," and it was less an autobiography or an apologia than a manifesto of Bergé's prejudices. The magic of Éluard did not rub off with the title—the book sold about twelve thousand copies—and some people who read it noted that, while Bergé liked liberty and found association with it irresistible, he had never been very tolerant of anyone else's liberty to disagree with him.

People are wary of Bergé. He accounts for half the Paris gossip, but rarely for the gossip in print. A conductor I talked to about Bergé called him "frightening," and an industrialist called him "dangerous," and a sculptor he used to collect called him "*un violent.*" Most of the other people I talked to prefaced anything critical or unflattering they had to say with "off the record." One of Rocard's advisers, who writes about Bergé himself, called up after we had talked and said, "Don't quote me." Helmut Newton, who used to photograph for Saint Laurent, and who volunteered nothing more ambiguous about Pierre Bergé than "He's a Scorpio like me," was so uneasy that he called up to remind me to check my quotes with him. Bergé's wrath is legendary. He attacked his friend Bernard-Henri Lévy, who could be called the philosopher of the caviar left, so savagely, and so personally, in *Globe* that the two stopped speaking. The subject was not philosophy, or books, but Mitterrand's Bosnian arms embargo. "Bernard was disloyal. *Voilà!*" is the way Bergé put it to me. (Lévy was cautious, and said, "Just say it pains me a lot to speak of Pierre Bergé because we were once good friends.") Lévy works at Grasset, which published "Liberté, J'Écris Ton Nom," and his friends think that maybe Bergé was angry at him because not many people bought it. Bergé thinks that Lévy was "jealous of my friendship with the President."

The reviews of "Liberté" were not as elegiac about Bergé as Bergé was about himself. They were, however, respectful, and *Le Monde*, where his financial adviser runs the readers' board, treated Bergé like Tocqueville in America. Some places avoided the problem of reviews by running interviews instead. Bergé has been a big source of advertising here, and he has used his power often, and famously, as a weapon. Manuel Carcassonne, the editor of an effusive biography of Saint Laurent that was, in Bergé's words, "idiotic, stupid, badly written, and of no interest," claims that Bergé used it to try to persuade the press that the book was all those things, and that the calls he got from Bergé before the book was published were so loud, and so threatening, that when he took his family on vacation his wife stopped answering the phone. Maryvonne de Saint-Pulgent, a music historian who recently wrote an exceptionally fair-minded book about the Opéra-Bastille—Mitterrand made Bergé president of the Opéra in 1988, after Bergé contributed handsomely to his reëlection, and Bergé ran it for five

"I have heard the mermaids singing, each to each. I told them to pipe down."

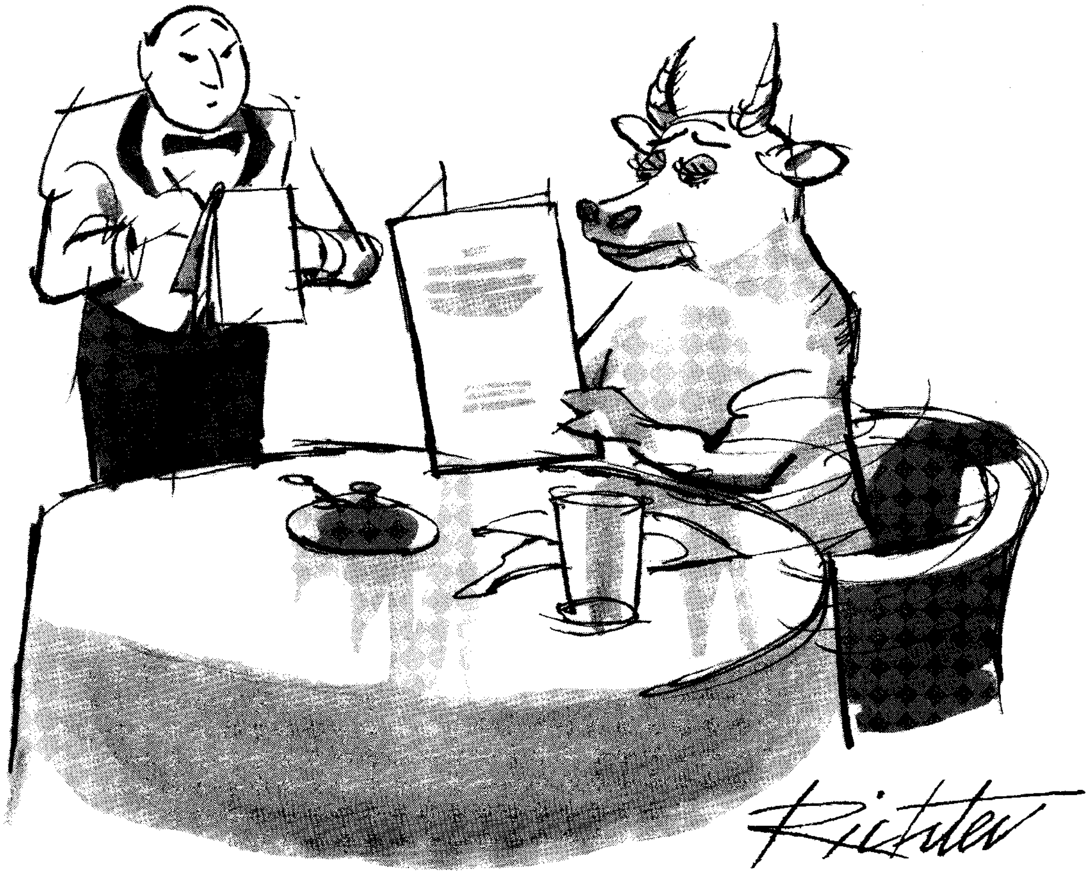
years—was certainly threatened; Bergé tried to sue her for publishing an article about the salary he was paying his protégé at the Opéra, the American conductor Myung-Whun Chung. In the end, he couldn't, but no one who has tangled with Bergé can say for sure which would be easier—to confront him in person or through a lawyer in court. A columnist at *Le Canard Enchaîné*, who used to refer to Bergé as Don Magnifico, claims that Bergé "hurled insults at me" across the tables at Lipp; one of the artistic directors whom Bergé, in his time at the Opéra-Bastille, fired says that Bergé hurled insults at *him* across the office; and the owner of a slick Paris magazine called *L'Insensé* hurled insults at *me* when I asked to see an interview with Saint Laurent that she had published three years earlier. (She said that Pierre Bergé didn't want anyone to see it, and that I was "impertinent" to expect to. I looked it up in the library.) Even the friends who throw birthday parties for Bergé called his office for permission to show me an eight-page *Globe* mockup—an "interview" with Bergé's mother, five pages of birthday greetings, and a horoscope—that was put together for the guests at dinner when he turned sixty. When André Leon Talley, from American *Vogue*, agreed to write the official biography of Saint Laurent, Bergé himself co-signed the contract, and when Talley abandoned the project it was Bergé who paid back Talley's considerable advance. In fashion, as in politics, this is called "controlling the image."

BERGÉ was born in 1930 on the Île d'Oléron, a small island off the coast of Charente-Maritime, where his mother taught school and his father worked as a tax inspector. (Bergé described him to me as a *fonctionnaire de finance*.) He grew up in the town of Lisieux, in Normandy, and then in the city of La Rochelle, where his father was posted, and where he now claims to have spent his adolescence sunk in Kropotkin and Feuerbach and Luther (his mother is Protestant) and thinking about anarchism and the Hegelian left and the arguments between Marx and Stirner. He says that he never really suffered from the presence of German soldiers in La Rochelle. (They stayed for nearly a year after the Liberation, until the Armistice was signed, and, given that many of the locals were ardent Pétainists, no one seems to have asked them to leave.) When he talks about his childhood, he says that his "primal scene" was not *his* war but the Spanish Civil War, and that his first "passion" was the Spanish Republican cause; he describes a reading list, and table talk at the tax inspector's house that was at least as lofty as anything at the Café de Flore with Sartre and de Beauvoir in attendance. The closest things to a boy's life I know about Bergé are that he fell off a wall in 1939, practiced the violin, and sneaked his cat to bed. He has a dog now, a Jack Russell terrier by the name of Ficelle, who sits in his arms at the Flore and comes to the office with him, to the evident distress of Saint Laurent's bulldog, Moujik II. The dogs get a lot of attention.

Sometimes Bergé says that he came to Paris wanting to be an artist. Sometimes he says he wanted to be a journalist. In any event, he was seventeen when he arrived, and he had his *bac*, and he was what the French call *débrouillard:* he was resourceful; he knew his way around. In Paris, he found a room near the Place de la République and looked for the right people, and whatever wrong people he got to know in those trial-and-error days have long been dropped from his list of "interests" and "influences" (though not, his friends point out, from his attentions and his charity). People remember him working, briefly, for a writer named Maurice Rostand—the son of Edmond Rostand, who wrote "Cyrano de Bergerac." Maurice was not the mentor for Pierre Bergé, but he was what one of Bergé's old friends described to me as "a little page for peace," and in those days Bergé was interested in pacifism, and especially in the oddball American pacifist Garry Davis, who was in Paris to recruit for the movement he called Citizens of the World. Bergé met Davis in 1948—Davis was pitching a tent in front of the Palais de Chaillot when Bergé walked by with a friend who knew him—and volunteered. He had been in Paris for less than a year and was getting established. He bought and sold books. He would walk to the river, mornings, and buy up first editions from the *bouquinistes* along the quais, and sell them in the afternoon to the Left Bank dealers. Once he met Davis and became a Citizen of the World, he decided to start a paper for the cause. The paper ran four pages and lasted two issues. Today, it accounts for the fourth paragraph of the office vita: "In 1949 [Bergé] founded the journal *La Patrie Mondiale*. Writers such as Albert Camus, Raymond Queneau, André Breton and Jean-Paul Sartre all contributed to this journal." Bergé repeated the list to me. I went to the library again and found Breton, in the first issue, along with an interview with Camus, but there was nothing in either issue by Sartre or

Queneau. (Bergé says now that they would have appeared if the paper hadn't folded.) The real charm of *La Patrie Mondiale* turned out to be Pierre Bergé and his eighteen-years-old-and-up-from-the-country excitement. ("Today, we have no more fear. . . . Today, we are ready. Ready for joy to reign instead of mourning! Ready to close the door on war!") But for Bergé himself *La Patrie Mondiale* was the start of a life of celebrity by association, and one of the more or less official stories with which he punctuates his recitation of that life involves the day Citizens of the World broke up a United Nations session, at the Palais de Chaillot, and he and Camus got arrested and spent the night in a makeshift cell. "Camus and me!" he says. "*Voilà!* My memories of Monsieur Albert Camus, Nobel Prize in Literature!"

A year later—he was selling books in a shop called L'Original, on the Rue de Seine, and had stopped to see a show at a gallery across the street—he met the painter Bernard Buffet. They were together eight years. Buffet, in those days, was considered the great young Paris painter, and Bergé, by his own admission, knew very little about painting. "I got interested in painting the way I got interested in fashion, because I met someone who made paintings, and then I met someone who made fashion," he told me. "When I met Buffet, I thought I had met Rimbaud." He meant a genius. He says that, being barely twenty when he met Buffet (who was twenty-two), he thought he had discovered "a new language in painting," like Cézanne's language—"something that would change everything." Now he knows that that language was "just a code," but he was impressionable then, and Buffet's success was, if anything, impressive. Bergé was by all accounts a difficult lover but a brilliant manager—his next career. "I never believed you had to know a lot to do something," he says. "And, besides, there are so many idiots who succeed in business that it wasn't too hard to think that I could, too." He did very well by Buffet. They moved in a crowd of artists and literati—Cocteau among them—though a friend of Bergé's who shared that crowd admits that "there were certainly more countesses and beautiful boys than Socialists." It was *le monde* and *le demi-monde*, and it had its own code, which is nearly impossible to decipher now. One thing is clear, though: even at twenty or twenty-five, Bergé was not a man you took lightly. He was not handsome—power, money, and tailoring have, to a degree, transformed him—and a friend who remembers him from Marie-Laure de Noailles's parties, in Provence, says that it was humiliating for him to be "the errand boy in a world of ephebes." But even then he had a reputation. The critic Matthieu Galey described him in his journals as "*le terrible cobra dominateur*." Bergé had attitude. Or chutzpah. He pursued his enthusiasms. He started writing to Jean Giono, who lived in Manosque, and eventually got an invitation to visit, and then an invitation to stay. He and Buffet spent the better part of a year at Giono's house, and then Buffet took a house for the two of them, ten miles away, in a village called Reillanne, and eventually he took a château near Aix, where Buffet painted and Bergé cultivated the right people to buy those paintings—other people with châteaux. No one I talked to who knew him then remembers his mentioning Kropotkin. His new crowd thought Kropotkin was an émigré socialite, and in the end its own table talk had mainly to do with whether Bergé was going to leave Buffet for Saint Laurent, or Buffet was going to leave Bergé and marry—which, in fact, he did. When the two men separated, Bergé moved what Galey called "a veritable Buffet museum" into the apartment he took with Saint Laurent, on the Île Saint-Louis. Today, the only Buffets he owns are in storage—which is not surprising, given that once he did know painting he put together a collection that begins with Ingres, Géricault, and Goya and ends with Matisse, Gauguin, and Cézanne. Buffet refuses to talk about Bergé *or* Saint Laurent, although Bergé apparently helped Buffet out, years later,



"Moo goo gai pan looks good."

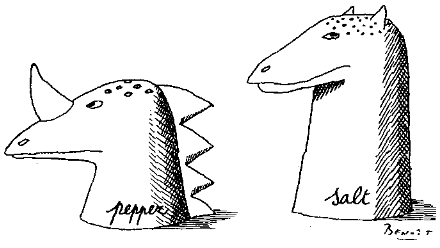
with a gallery contract, and Saint Laurent dedicated some dresses to him. Bergé talks about Buffet with the magnanimity of a man who keeps a Van Gogh in his living room. "I am sad, *moi*, to see what Buffet has become," he told me. "A bourgeois painter. In no museum in the world. Not one. Except a few Japanese."

BERGÉ met Saint Laurent on January 30, 1958, the day that Saint Laurent, at twenty-one, presented his first collection as Christian Dior's successor at the House of Dior. Dior was one of the last couturiers to train designers in his atelier, and when he died, in October of 1957, he had been training Saint Laurent—and telling reporters that his young protégé was responsible for a lot of his best ideas. It was not a tradition that lasted. ("I don't see much else out there," Saint Laurent says.) Dior died at Montecatini, taking a diet cure, but Bergé, who knew him well, had dinner with him the night before he left for Italy, an occasion that has entered the official "life"—"This means that I, *moi*, am the last person to have dined with him in Paris," Bergé told me—the way his first dinner with Saint Laurent has entered it. That dinner took place a few days after the collection. It is known at the Saint Laurent offices, at 5 Avenue Marceau, as *la rencontre*. The encounter. Bergé can remember every detail—the restaurant, the menu, the people who came—and so, in a way, can Saint Laurent, who calls it "the dinner after my Trapèze collection." As Bergé says, modestly, "the rest is in all the books."

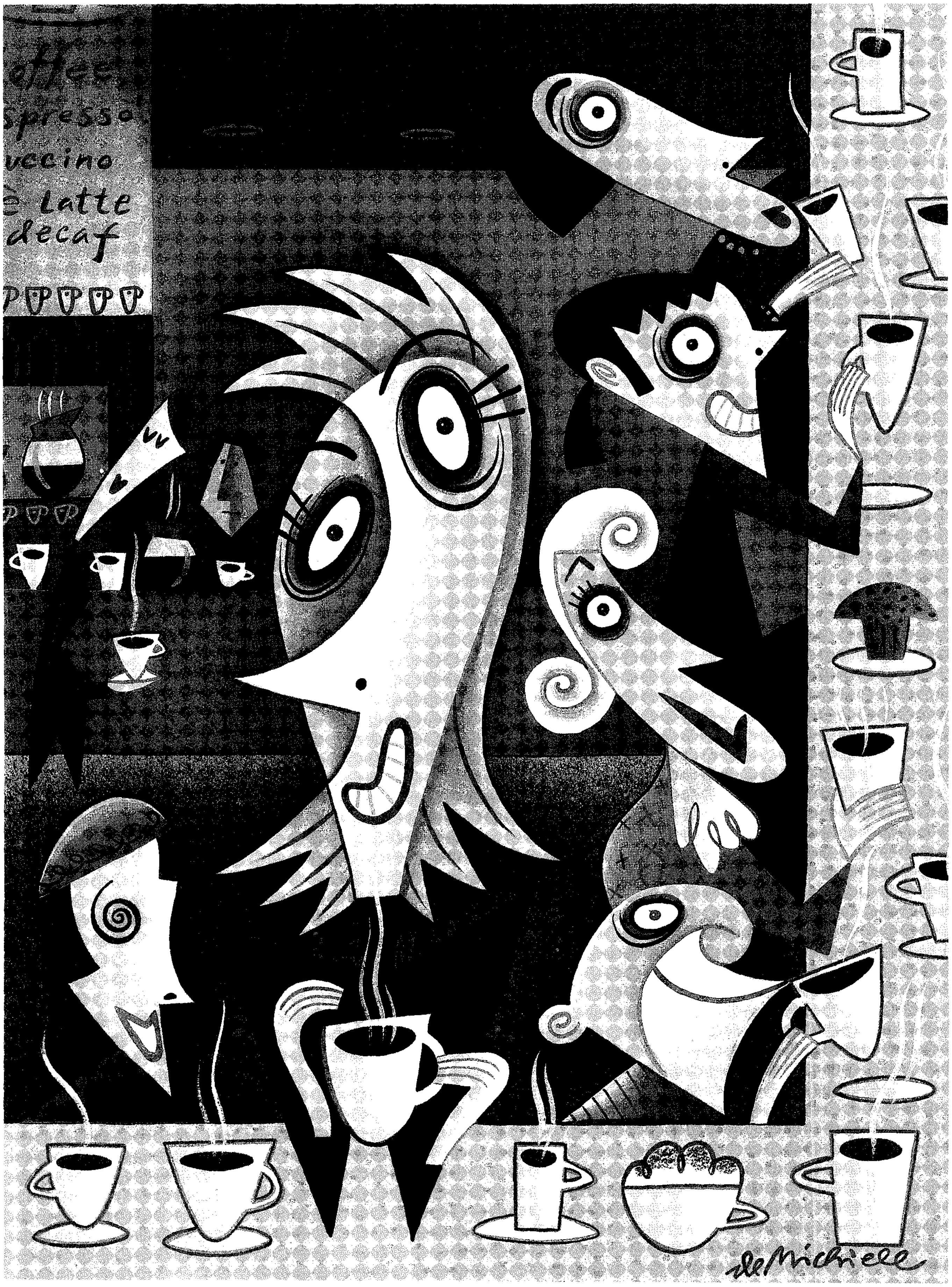
The couple Yves Saint Laurent and Pierre Bergé was unusual, if not unique, in the world of la haute couture. The original couture houses had been family businesses, like the House of Worth, and the ones that survive today are big businesses, and belong to industrialists who have bought couturiers the way they once bought Chinese bronzes or racing stables, or else to cosmetic-and-perfume millionaires looking for what is known in the trade as a prestige label. Bergé once said that in business "you have to let your instinct speak," and his own instinct was uncanny. He was determined to make a legend of Saint Laurent. The artist, at twenty-one, was already complaining—about his nerves, about his health, about his youth "sacrificed to beauty." But Bergé knew this time that he had finally "met Rimbaud," and he says there was no question in his mind: he was going to build a House for Saint Laurent. He didn't have long to wait. Saint Laurent was replaced at Dior after two and a half years and six collections; the excuse was a bad collection, but the truth was that the man who owned Dior disliked the boy, and let him be drafted, and hired Marc Bohan. Saint Laurent broke down before he even made it to basic training. Six weeks later, Bergé rescued him from an Army hospital. They spent a month in the Canary Islands, and then Bergé brought him home and sued the House of Dior. He worked the street and he worked his connections. He persuaded an Atlanta insurance millionaire named J. Mack Robinson, who says he knew nothing about fashion, to back their venture. He raided the ateliers at Dior and Givenchy for personnel. He opened the House of Yves Saint Laurent on December 4, 1961, and by the early seventies he and Saint Laurent had launched a perfume, bought back their label from America (Robinson had sold it, along with their perfume and cosmetic rights, to Lanvin-Charles of the Ritz), opened their first Rive Gauche ready-to-wear boutiques, and started licensing with a clothing manufacturer called Mendès. By 1977, they were making fifteen million dollars a year. "They had the intelligence to stay together," Denise Fayolle, who used to create the perfume and cosmetic ads for Saint Laurent, told me. "It wasn't intelligence," Bergé says. "It was necessity." By the nineteen-eighties, he and Saint Laurent were multimillionaires, with a Deauville *manoir*, a villa in Marrakech, a theatre in Paris where Bergé produced plays and "Musical Monday" concerts, and a famously overdecorated apartment, on the Rue de Babylone, where they lived together when they weren't fighting, and received the rich, the chic, and the shameless of their various worlds.

Bergé in fact inhabited more worlds than Saint Laurent. If it is hard to associate the Saint Laurent of what his biographer Laurence Benaïm calls "the Paris of the divine decadence" ("champagne, feathers, petards, and vaseline") with the timid man in a white laboratory coat who draws hearts on New Year's greetings for his seamstresses, it is even harder to associate the man of letters in a pin-striped suit, at lunch with the President of the French Republic, with the man who once confided to Andy Warhol that he wore a cock ring. Bergé's shrewdness was to know when and how to keep his worlds apart. No one in any of them knew much about the others, and in the end the result was that people at the ateliers believed he was a great amateur of music, because he ran the Opéra-Bastille, and people at the Élysée believed he was a great manager, because he ran a dress company, and people in business believed he was an intellectual, because he recommended books to the President and had produced Cocteau in his theatre and wrote a column that very few of them could read. The one thing everybody did know about Bergé was that the strain showed. "You could say that Pierre drove Yves because he loved him, or because Yves was, finally, the source of everything—his power, his reputation, his fortune," a friend of Saint Laurent's told me. "It all comes down to Pascal: the measure of a man is the distance between his own extremes." He meant that for as long as Saint Laurent showed up for work Bergé was happy.

Saint Laurent does not read Bergé's column. He reads his Proust—he says he opens to any page, and finds "truth"—and he is entirely uninterested in *Globe* or in politics, or for that matter in AIDS advocacy or human rights or most of the other things that interest Bergé. "All these wars and all this misery and all—it shocks me very much," he told me. "When I don't like something"—something happening in the world—"I tell Pierre." The assumption has always been that if something goes wrong out there in the world Bergé will go forth and fix it. It is Saint Laurent's assumption ("His power is Herculean, he can do anything," Saint Laurent told me), and the assumption of all the people who, for reasons of business or affection or envy or morbid curiosity, speculate on the relations of these two men. For thirty-six years, Saint Laurent has been the unworldly youth, and by now there are very few people outside the fashion world who could tell you for sure whether Yves Saint Laurent is an eternal eighteen or so ancient that every dress he



CAFFEINE RUSH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designs is a message *d'outre-tombe*. The fact that he is neither (he is fifty-eight and portly) is less a house secret than a house discretion—maybe because it's easier to promote him as a sensitive and precocious boy, with a burden of genius beyond his years (or as an aged master, rising from his deathbed to bestow one last gift of beauty on the world), than as a middle-aged man with what are known, out there in the world, as "responsibilities." That he is a genius is indisputable, that he is a victim is questionable. ("You know, they treat each other badly in public, and then the door closes, and there's another story," Lagerfeld says.) At any rate, he is more of a baby than a youth: his famous sweetness is like a baby's burp; it has nothing to do with you. Laurence Benaïm says that he suffered enormously in Oran, and Saint Laurent says so himself. Colonial Algeria was a French raj—a world of wilting women and blustery, philistine patriots—and it can't have been a congenial place for a teen-age aesthete who liked to write poetry and draw clothes and put on costume dramas with his sisters. If Algeria was drifting toward the civil war that in a few years' time would leave a million dead, Saint Laurent does not seem to have noticed. He was one of the privileged: he had money and connections, and he came to Paris under the patronage of Michel de Brunhoff, the editor of French *Vogue*. It isn't surprising that he broke down from the shock of getting drafted, because most of the young men drafted in France in 1960 were sent to Algeria to fight. The drafting of Saint Laurent was a French scandal, on the order of the drafting of Elvis Presley or Muhammad Ali, even among people whose own children were fighting in his place—though it probably tells you more about France than about Yves Saint Laurent that, even today, his appearances are recorded and analyzed and argued over like Elvis sightings.

THE WINTER: 1748

(Erasmus Darwin, 1731-1802)

A little satin like wind at the door.
My mother slips past in great side hoops,
arced like the ears of elephants—
on her head a goat-white wig,
on her cheek a dollop of mole.

She has entered the evening, and I
her room with its hazel light.
Where her wig had rested is a leather head,
a stand, perfect in its shadow but
carrying in fact, where the face should be,
a swath of door. It cups

in its skull-curved closure
clay hair stays, a pouch of wig talc
that snows at random and lends to the table

a neck-shaped ring.
When I reach inside I am frosted,
my hand like a pond in winter, pale
fingers below of leaves or carp.

I have studied a painting from Holland,
where a village moves out to a frozen river.
Skaters and sleighs, of course, but
ale tents, the musk of chestnuts,

someone thick on a chair with a lap robe.
I do not know what becomes of them
when the flow revisits. Or why
they have moved from their warm hearthstones
to settle there—except that one step

is a method of gliding,
the self for those moments
weightless and preened as my leather companion.
And I do not know if the fish there
have frozen, or wait in some stasis
like flowers. Perhaps they are stunned
by the strange heaven—dotted with

boot soles and chair legs—
and are slumped on the mud-rich bottom,
waiting through time for a kind of shimmer,
an image perhaps, something
known and familiar, something

rushing above in their own likeness,
silver and blade-thin at the rim of the world.

There is no doubt that, for a while after *la rencontre*, Saint Laurent and Bergé were happy together. Saint Laurent gathered his Paris muses around him at his new atelier—beautiful, spacey, androgynous girls, like Loulou de La Falaise and Betty Catroux, who made Catherine Deneuve, his official "muse," look matronly by comparison. In those days, he was beautiful himself. He made the club scene and the drug scene and the gay scene, and, however timid he was then, it did not inhibit him from posing naked for the advertisement for his men's cologne. (Jeanloup Sieff took the picture.) Inevitably, there were rumors about what went on in the bedroom at the Rue de Babylone, and even rumors about who was in that bedroom. But for fourteen years the apartment Bergé shared with Saint Laurent was the place to be in Paris, and for most of those years the friends they invited were the same friends: the baronesses and princesses who still figure in Saint Laurent's conversation and in the seating charts for the eleven-o'clock showing of his couture collection (the "best friends" showing, which has half the fashion press in attendance). Now their friends are different. "*We* are very different," Saint Laurent says, in a voice I have heard described as the voice of an eighteenth-century libertine deciding to leave his bed. Bergé is "idealistic" and "I am down to earth." Bergé moved out in 1986; their famous "marriage" has been a marriage of convenience for a long time. Saint Laurent told me that Bergé was always "a little jealous" of the attention he got; he said it sweetly. He describes their relations this way: "It's more agreeable to work with a friend than with an enemy."

The House of Yves Saint Laurent is a little like a church. There is a big framed picture of the couturier in nearly every room, and people who spend their time there say that "to enter the House is to enter a religion." You take your vows. You accept "a certain fundamentalism." You worship. All this may be gratifying to Saint Laurent, but it can't do much for the Pierre Bergé whose own mother remembers him as an "unbearable" child, always asking, "Do you love me?" Denise Fayolle says that "when Yves comes up the stairs everyone says, 'Ah, the *patron* is here,' " and surely it hasn't been easy for Bergé to hear this for thirty years. Bergé's office has two pictures of the *patron*—a huge Warhol "Saint Laurent" and a photograph of the artist as a very young man, by Luc Fournol. They stare down at the collage propped against the fireplace, standing in for the oils at home; and at the books piled everywhere, for the restless mind; and at the framed snapshots of the famous, for what the French call *connaissance.* The pictures of Saint Laurent made me uncomfortable every time I visited the office, and the office made me uncomfortable, though I admired almost everything in it and would like to have left with the books. It was a mise en scène for the conversation of a man of letters who just happens to have sold a fashion business for six hundred and fifty million dollars but wants you to know that "fashion" is the least of his credentials.

It is not surprising that, after thirty-six years of Saint Laurent, Bergé is tired of fashion. Lagerfeld thinks that he was always tired of fashion—that "he hated the world, the people, the employees, the friends, or what he thought were friends." Certainly Bergé has little interest in women—unlike Saint Laurent, who seems fascinated, if not by women, then by the way women look, smell, move, dress, undress, and seduce—and when he does talk about fashion it is usually to say that there is no "fashion." There is only "art" and "Sunday painting" and magazines like *Vogue* that promote the Sunday painters and their unwearable clothes, because those clothes are easier to understand. Once, in the course of two short sentences about clothes, Bergé brought up Rimbaud, Genet, Picasso, Braque, Henry Miller, D. W. Griffith, and Sergei

THE SKATER: 1775

(Susannah Wedgwood at Ten)

He would come, Darwin, in a yellow-wheeled chaise,
past the mine shafts and whim gins, the bottle kilns,
past the patchwork of geese on the carriageway,

and counsel her father on the treatment of gums,
of eyelids, or the maddening rasp
in the knee, his long physician's bulk
trembling the floorboards as he walked.

She would stand by his chair
to study his face, his skin with its smallpox scars—
each cupping, she felt, a grain of the finest pepper—
how his chin pulled back as he stammered
his verses: the "t"s and "c"s, the shivering "n"s:

From Nature's coffins to her cradles turn . . .

how his fingers resolved into slender tips,
tapered like formal candles.

He brought to her once
two sheep-jaw skates, fearsome and splendid
in their muslin pouch, the teeth in brackets
on the leather boot soles, each jawbone below
filed to a blade. And walked with her then

to the winter pond, the white shrubs
with their blossoms of crows. The teeth were chewed
to a biscuit brown, with streaks of white
where the grasses ran. And the grinding fissures,
spidered like glass, chafed her a bit
when she touched them. *Hang o'er the gliding steel,*

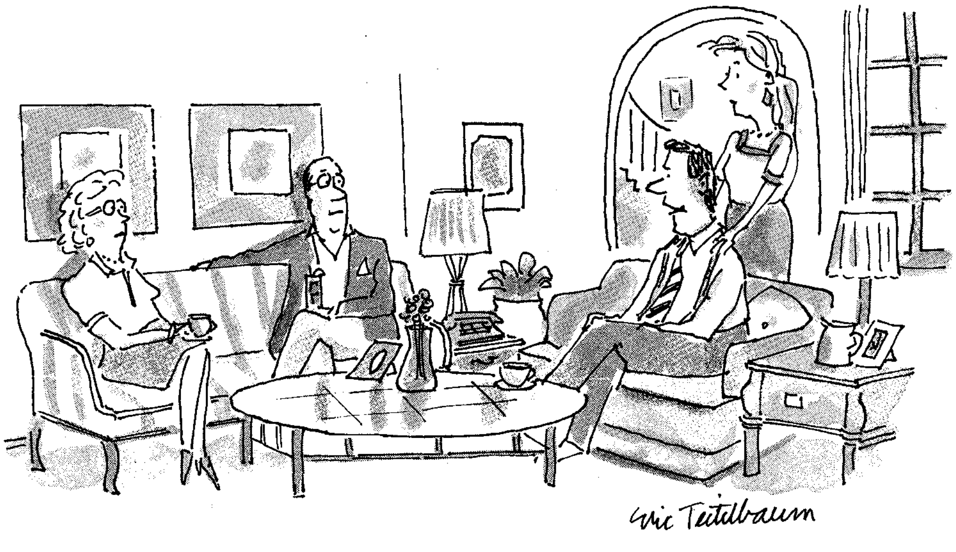
he recited, *and hiss along the ice . . .*

his words a series of quick clouds
as she circled before him, gliding in fact
on bone, not steel, with the sound of her strokes
less a hiss than a breathing, as if
the lost world resurfaced there.
Dark girl, pushing off with each high-laced boot.
Then the teeth, then the bone, then the mirroring ice.

—Linda Bierds

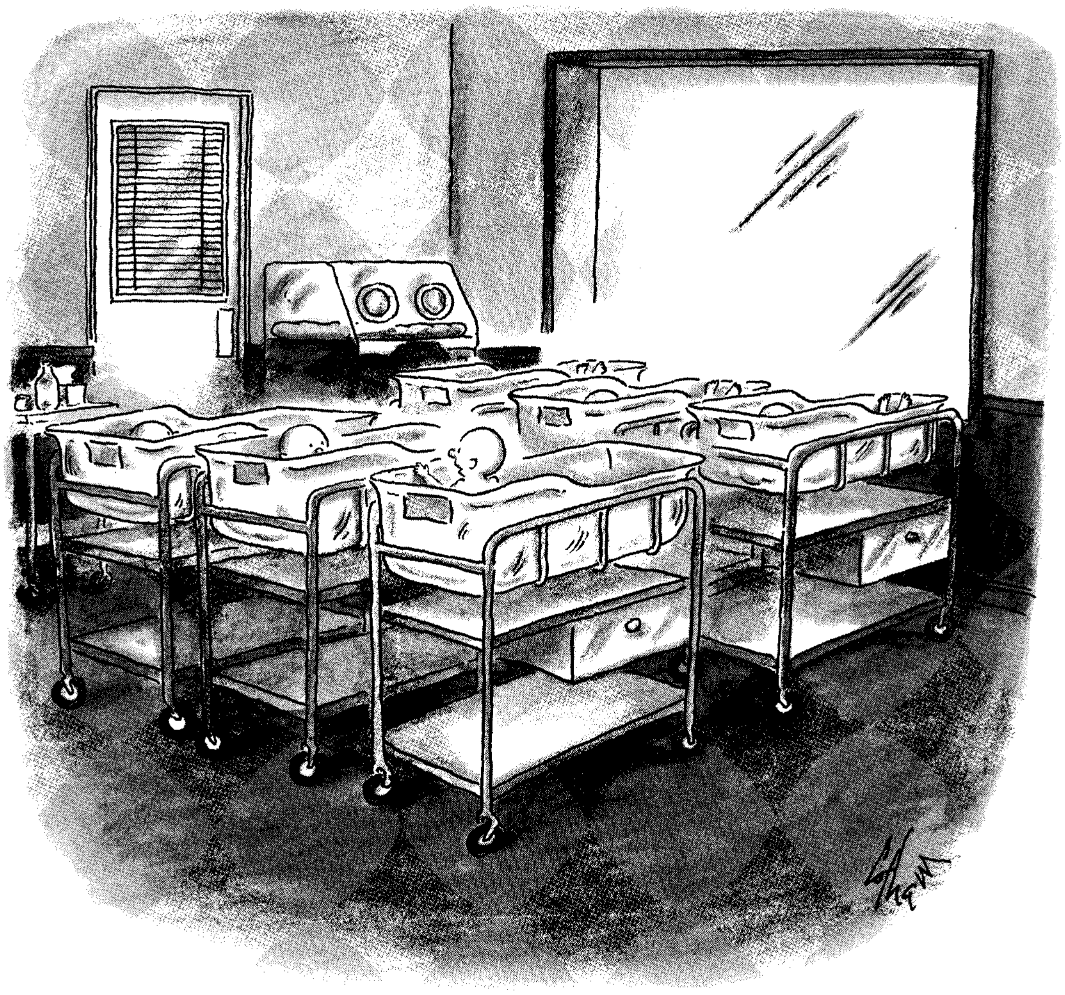
Eisenstein. They were the Saint Laurents. He said you had better be an artist yourself if you were going to be "disrespectful" or "derisive" of a clothes artist like Yves Saint Laurent—or Coco Chanel. He was talking about Lagerfeld, whose delirious derisiveness as head of the House of Chanel has made him the bête noire of the House of Saint Laurent, and whose view of the business is best summed up in the statement "This idea of suffering for the dress—I mean, dressmaking is O.K., but you sell dresses, you don't sell anguish." In the Saint Laurent house discourse, there have been only three artists making clothes in the twentieth century: Chanel, Dior, and Saint Laurent. (Yves, who can be petulant on the subject of predecessors, sometimes forgets Dior and puts in Schiaparelli instead.)

Bergé's project at Saint Laurent was simple—to keep his artist productive. "I belonged to him," he told me. Bergé hired people who would understand that when it came to Saint Laurent the decisions were his. He took on very young men—his few executives are men—and gave them good jobs and important titles, and they made their careers with him, and were loyal. Jean-Francis Bretelle, the general director of Saint Laurent Couture, was twenty-four when Bergé discovered him, working for the company's accountants, and told him to write his contract and name his salary. Christophe Girard, the general secretary ("*chef du cabinet*," he calls it), was the same age when Bergé found him, translating for Saint Laurent in Tokyo. Alain Coblence, the company's international lawyer, was twenty-seven. Coblence is not a house counsel—he is on retainer and has a lot of other clients—but he put together the complicated buyback of Saint Laurent cosmetics and perfumes from Charles of the Ritz, in 1986, and helped put together the public offering of Saint Laurent stock, in 1989. He is a rich man now, and is devoted to Pierre Bergé. Coblence and Bretelle and Girard constitute a sort of claque; they want you to know the "touching, fragile part" of the man who made them. Girard functions as a facilitator for Bergé. He smooths the feathers that Bergé ruffles (though not, apparently, the feathers of "the Paris of the divine decadence"). Girard's devotion is such that he quit his club when somebody there asked him how it felt "to be working for a queer." (He said, laudably, "Just like any two queers working together.") He wants you to know the Bergé who quietly supports ARCAT-SIDA, an AIDS action group that he and Bergé helped found, the Bergé "who taught me not to shut up" about his sexuality—all of which makes it puzzling that the famous fact of Saint Laurent's homosexuality was not "officially" disclosed until Saint Laurent outed himself three years ago in an interview with *Le Figaro*. It may have been less Saint Laurent's image than his own that Bergé was protecting. Paris business has never been welcoming to gay men. The common wisdom was that couturiers could, or even should, be gay, the better to "understand" women (Saint Laurent told me, "I love to look at pretty women"), but that the businessmen behind the ateliers had to be properly, respectably French—men who slept with women. Bergé himself was known in the world of Paris C.E.O.s as *le parfumeur*, and it must have been galling to him, since the figures proved that he was one of the best C.E.O.s around. Bretelle, who is not gay, says that when he announced that he was joining Saint Laurent even his friends looked at this as "not something very normal." And Coblence, who is not gay, either, says that Bergé was "flayed alive" by the business world's contempt—though in any event he thinks it's wrong to look at Bergé as a businessman when Bergé himself says that the only thing that interests him about business is the "strategy." Coblence prefers to describe Bergé as an impulsive, entrepreneurial sort of person, who "ran his business like a boutique and never met a banker" until halfway into the nineteen-eighties.



"Mr. and Mrs. Ackerman, I'll come to the point. I'm deeply in love with your daughter, and I'd like to move in with you."

The Saint Laurent Groupe used to be what the French call a *société en commandite*—which for practical purposes means a limited partnership. The group had gone into debt to buy back its perfumes and cosmetics in 1986. Bergé had had to purchase all the Charles of the Ritz labels, along with his own, and he'd had to pay six hundred and thirty-one million dollars for them. Some of this he hoped to recover (and did) by selling off those labels; some he raised by selling a fifteen-per-cent share in Saint Laurent to the Olivetti chairman, Carlo De Benedetti; and the rest he eventually covered when the company went public. Saint Laurent was the first couture company on the Paris exchange, and, in theory at least, this left Bergé with problems of stockholder interference. A Frenchman named Alain Minc, who was then the financial director of De Benedetti's holding company, thought that Bergé should anticipate those problems by turning the limited partnership into a limited partnership *par actions*—a restructuring that would keep control of Saint Laurent in-house and insure that Bergé could not be challenged, let alone replaced, by any outside stockholders' action. This is what Bergé did. Minc went on Bergé's board as a voting partner, and in the end he got to devote a lot of time to Saint Laurent: in 1992, De Benedetti let Minc go because of the advice Minc had given *him*. (Jean-Michel Quatrepoint, who runs a financial newsletter here called *La Lettre A*, describes Minc as "the Françoise Sagan of the political economy," and I have heard that in his time Minc has cost the various companies he advised, among them Saint-Gobain, hundreds of millions of dollars in losses.) Minc was in some ways very much like Bergé. He was an intellectual who worshipped power and wrote scolding books with portentous titles (my favorite is "Frenchmen, If You Dared . . ."). It is said that, after Bergé, he was the most powerful person at Yves Saint Laurent, with a hand in all its finances, from the public offering to the sale of the company itself. What he brought to Bergé, in 1986, was another set of credentials: he was one of a handful of *hauts fonctionnaires* with the school ties and the singular ambition to broker the arrangements between the state and big business in France. Right now, he is the éminence grise of Édouard Balladur, the conservative Prime Minister (he was just as close to the old Socialist Prime Minister Pierre Mauroy), and, as it happens, Balladur's budget minister, Nicolas Sarkozy, also writes books. Last February, *Globe* ran a long and very respectful interview with Sarkozy. It was taken as a sign that the caviar left was beginning to spoil, and that Bergé was hedging his loyalties for what is already called here the *après-Mitterrand.*



"*So! Who's the father?*"

• •

G*LOBE* was never a magazine in the Saint Laurent style. In its first incarnation as a weekly (it began as a monthly), it was an outsized tabloid with garish colors and brutal graphics and very little of what the French call *grand reportage.* (Benamou, the editor, told me it was a cross between *The New Yorker* and *Rolling Stone.*) The press run was officially sixty-five thousand copies. I have never encountered anyone except Lagerfeld who read it faithfully. What gives *Globe* its peculiar prominence—if prominence is the word—is its association with François Mitterrand. If you read *Globe*, you get the President's hit list, and Pierre Bergé telling you to pay attention.

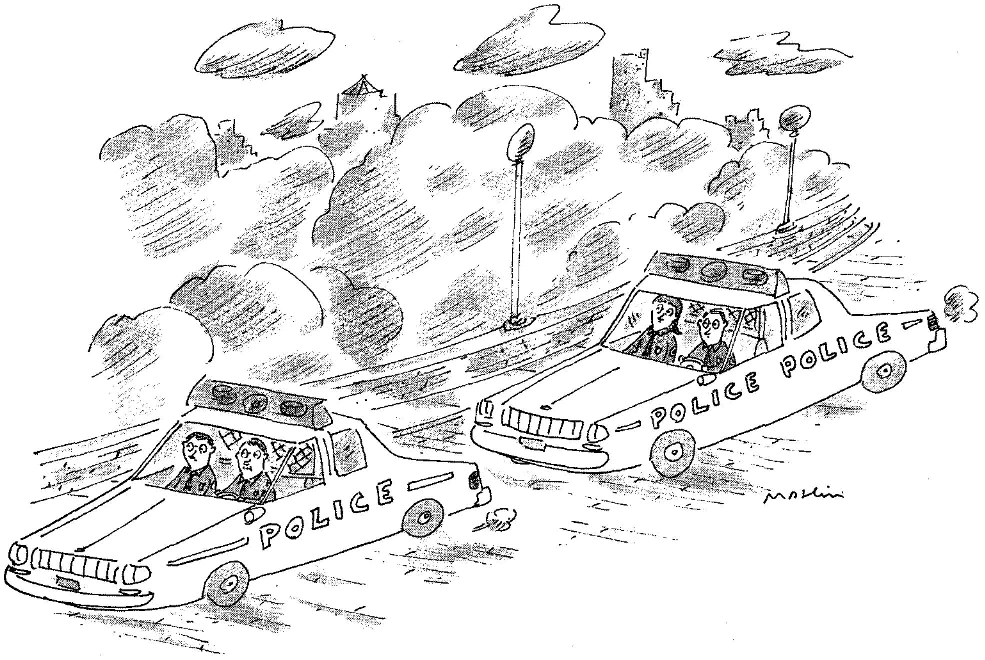
Bergé now owns nearly seventy-five per cent of *Globe*. He bought into the magazine in 1986, a year after Benamou and Bernard-Henri Lévy, who was one of the original partners (along with a designer they knew and a backer they will not name), put out their first issue. Lévy was already guiding Bergé into the caviar left. They had met in 1984, when Bergé was planning the catalogue for a Saint Laurent retrospective at the fashion museum he was founding, and funding, at the Louvre, and decided that Lévy should write an introduction. The story goes that Bergé had seen Lévy in a magazine. I don't know if it was the famous "*philosophe*" shot—long, tousled hair, sleepy eyes, shirt open to the waist—and neither does Lévy, but I have heard that Bergé told the people putting together the catalogue, "That's an 'image' we have to have!" Lévy was so visibly, and so fashionably, an *homme de gauche* that he must have seemed critical to Bergé's project. Bergé put him on his board. Lévy knew nothing at all about business, but for the women who bought their clothes at 5 Avenue Marceau in the nineteen-eighties his new and scrupulously publicized friendship with Pierre Bergé gave the ten-thousand-dollar hand-beaded jacket the political cachet of a Mao jacket at the barricades in May of 1968. "It was the moment the left got dressed," a woman at the opening of the retrospective, in May of 1986, told me. Lévy had written his introduction ("His life is a legend. His name is an empire . . ."), but the star of the catalogue was François Mitterrand, who wrote that Yves Saint Laurent had entered "the history of elegance."

Benamou says now that he and Lévy wanted to create "an elegant, chic review for a plugged-in generation." He means, more accurately, that they wanted to persuade the eighteen-year-olds who were starting to vote that François Mitterrand was plugged in, too—someone on the order of Mick Jagger or Grace Jones, someone sexy. Benamou had met Bergé in 1981. He was working for a daily called *Le Quotidien de Paris*, and he wrote a piece about Bergé, who, he says, left him with "good memories." When *Globe* ran out of money, five years later, Bergé was the man he called. They had a meeting of minds and ambitions. Bergé was just beginning to emerge from Saint Laurent's shadow and to cast his own on Paris, and he was looking for a forum—though Benamou maintains that Bergé never actually invited himself into *Globe*. Benamou says they were "talking about literature" one night at Récamier, which is a Left Bank restaurant where the caviar left talks about literature, and "suddenly I said, 'Pierre, you have to write,' and I persuaded him." One of the first issues they produced together had Mitterrand on the cover, but Bergé himself eased into Mitterrand. He wrote about Mayakovsky and Lili Brik ("exposing . . . before an astonished world, the miracle of their love"). He wrote about Jean Genet ("Genet is dead, it's a little like Divine dying a second time"). He called them all "*tu*." Even the dead were friends. He wrote an obituary for Andy Warhol ("Andy, my friend. . . . Once, we found ourselves together in Marrakech") and, only last year, a tribute to "Mike [sic] Jagger" ("I remember. It was my birthday . . . and you were there"). It has to be said that he never called the President of France "*tu*," maybe because selling Mitterrand to kids was harder than selling Jagger, or even Mayakovsky, and he sensed that it demanded a more authoritarian tone. He is not religious (although he says he inherited his mother's "Protestant rigor"), but even now when he writes about François Mitterrand he sounds like someone who has just been handed down the Tablets.

Jean Montaldo, who wrote the book "Mitterrand and the Forty Thieves," which broke the *Globe* scandal, is hardly a savory character. He was once involved with the French secret police, and he used to write for a fanatically right-wing paper called *Minute*. But he seems to have evidence when he says that *Globe's* campaign moonlighting was underwritten by the Élysée with what amounted to laundered money—money drawn from municipal budgets in towns the Socialists controlled and funnelled through "research institutes" into a Party holding company called Urba. And, given that the Socialist Party Secretary is going on trial now because of Urba, the courts must think that they have evidence about the Élysée, too. Bergé himself dismisses the man, the book, the scandal. The fact that *Globe* took money from the Socialist Party in Mitterrand's good cause does not embarrass him. As far as he is concerned, the important thing was for Mitterrand to win. He told me once that he understands what he calls bad faith in a good cause. His real villains are "intellectuals" who do not appreciate that Mitterrand is the first *homme de gauche* to have come to power in France since Pierre Mendès France was Prime Minister in the nineteen-fifties—and the only one to have stayed in power. (Mendès France's government lasted nine months.) "I love intellectuals," he wrote in *Globe* after the last elections. "Thanks to Zola, we don't have to blush about the Dreyfus affair, but, thanks to Céline and de Brasillach, we ought to temper our enthusiasm." He is certainly right in that. He told me, "When I see papers on the left that don't hesitate, that didn't hesitate . . . to attack Mitterrand, and very strongly, then I have to ask myself, 'What do they want?' " As it happens, the best piece of political writing Bergé ever did was not in *Globe* but in one of those papers on the left: it was in *Le Monde*, in 1991, and it warned the left against Bernard Tapie, the Marseilles millionaire with the soccer team and the demagogic leanings. Three years later, Mitterrand backed Tapie against Rocard in the European Parliament elections; Bergé stopped writing about Tapie, and *Globe* stopped writing about Tapie. "It was very clear, to me, to Benamou, that Mitterrand wanted one thing," he told me. "And that was that Rocard lose." Tapie was "the only person who could bring him down . . . so it was evident that Tapie, whether we liked him or not, was going to become our ally. We knew he was a 'one shot' and that no one would hear of him again." Bergé was prescient. Tapie was indicted after the election, and Mitterrand did nothing to stop his getting indicted. Mitterrand was "Machiavelli in the best sense"—sometimes it's "Clausewitz," and once even it was "Pericles"—but this was probably not much comfort to Michel Rocard.

PIERRE BERGÉ'S friendship with François Mitterrand is unique in the world of French politics, just as his friendship with Yves Saint Laurent was unique in the world of French fashion. People track it like a great romance, and in a way it is. They let you know that Bergé had breakfast with the President on the morning of his last Bastille Day at the Élysée, and lunch with the President on the occasion of his seventy-eighth birthday; that Bergé was "the first person outside the family" to see the President after a prostate operation; that Bergé was predicting that François Mitterrand would surprise everyone, and survive, and save France with another seven years in office. They speculate endlessly on what has brought the President and the *parfumeur* together—besides, of course, their taste in poetry, and the obvious fact that they share a peculiar talent for what could be called the discipline of loyalty. In Bergé and Mitterrand the power to reward and the impulse to punish are exquisitely combined, and it may simply be that, recognizing this talent in each other, they feel entirely at home in each other's company. The caviar left certainly needed discipline. It was an amateur, scattershot construct, with none of the class solidarity that traditionally unites and divides the French. It wasn't workers or aristocrats or Catholics or farmers or that bedrock confraternity the petite bourgeoisie. It wasn't even necessarily rich—whatever its eating habits. It was, in part, 1968 grown up and getting successful (along with getting dressed), and discovering that success attached to lofty attitudes was making the left glamorous and, in the process, making them powerful. "The marriage of the beautiful people and the beautiful thought," someone here called it in the mid-eighties, pointing out that in America it was "the beautiful people and the wrong thought." It was, in any event, self-promotion in the name of France, and it came into being at a moment when France was having what amounted to an identity crisis—about itself, its prominence, its "image" in the world. Bergé had voted for the conservative Raymond Barre in 1981. He watched the returns at a party at Guy de Rothschild's town house, telling the guests to emigrate if Mitterrand won. He says now that he was right about Mitterrand in 1981, because Mitterrand was in a nationalizing mood—Mitterrand nationalized, for one thing, Rothschild's bank—but Bergé knew a lot about image and, like everybody else, he had to admit that Mitterrand himself knew something about image when Mitterrand ended an inaugural march through Paris to the music of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, laid Socialist roses on the tombs of France's republican heroes, in the Panthéon crypt, and emerged as a hundred and fifty voices sang the "Ode to Joy" and Placido Domingo burst into "La Marseillaise." The sociologist Jean Baudrillard called that moment "the ecstasy of socialism," and suggested that Mitterrand's new nationalist left was a "gigantic special effect," having more to do with the aesthetic imagination of the French than with any real ideology. (The last time Mitterrand had pulled off a special effect like that was 1959, when he staged what looked like an assassination attempt on himself in front of the Paris Observatory.) Mitterrand was politics as fashion show, and not, as they say in the business, off the rack. By the time Pierre Bergé came courting, Mitterrand was less interested in nationalizing banks and putting Communists in his Cabinet than in building monuments to himself all over Paris, and recording his conversations with Elie Wiesel, "for posterity," and sending his wife to the collections at Saint Laurent, where she and the Baroness de Rothschild could nod politely across the chairs of Paloma Picasso and Catherine Deneuve.

Bergé actually met Mitterrand for the first time through the insistent good offices of Jack Lang, the Minister of Culture. Bergé was looking for ways to "help" French culture, and he had already been talking about this to Lang, who had a famous weakness for what he described to me once as "cultural conversation." (It is said that Lang wanted to rename his ministry the Ministry of Culture, Beauty, and Intelligence.) Bergé must have given him a lot of cultural conversation, along with the dinners and the Côte-Rôtie, because Lang, in turn, did a lot for Bergé. Lang approved the fashion museum at the Louvre, and even obligingly fired the curator who had wanted to open it with a retrospective of Dior. He approved the fashion shows in the Cour Carrée and the homage to Saint Laurent at the Opéra-Bastille. But the most important thing he did for Pierre Bergé was to smooth the way to his friendship with the President. He began with Mme. Mitterrand, who put Bergé on the board of her human-rights foundation, France-Libertés. (Bergé's lawyer Alain Coblence was also involved with France-Libertés. It was the obligatory charity of the caviar left, and I remember a benefit screening of "The Sheltering Sky," in 1990, at Bergé's Opéra, which was made memorable by the consternation of ten robed Tuareg, imported by Mme. Mitterrand for the occasion, when Bertolucci's Tuareg noble went down on Debra Winger.) In 1986, Bergé invited Mitterrand to lunch in Marrakech. Two years later, when Mitterrand was running for a second term, Bergé sent a famous open letter to the industrialists of France urging them to give their money and their votes to the President. The letter did not endear Bergé to many of the industrialists. They told their wives to stop shopping at Saint Laurent (their wives ignored them), and the chairman of Peugeot even told his workers to stop shopping at Saint Laurent (the workers solemnly agreed to buy their ball gowns at Balmain or Givenchy). But the letter endeared Bergé to Mitterrand. Business in France had always slipped money to the left; businessmen had to do business, whoever was in power, and they were expected to look to the future, right and left, when it came to contributions. But this was the first time anyone had suggested that they do it openly, and even enthusiastically—for France. Bergé certainly let it be known that he wrote his letter for France. The notion that he arranged his way into the Élysée amuses him, even now. "I never try to meet people," he says, and seems to believe it. "With Mitterrand, it was something completely different." He went stumping with Mitterrand that spring, filling his company Learjets with movie stars and pop stars and trendy intellectuals, and delivering them to Socialist rallies to perform. There was always a party after a rally, and, as Bergé tells the story, his "true encounter" with Mitterrand happened at one of those parties, in Strasbourg: Bergé was talking about a poet named René-Guy Cadou—a Breton schoolteacher who had died young and left a small, local reputation for what the French call "the great themes," Death and Nature—when Mitterrand, "sitting between Michel Piccoli and



Patrice Chéreau," stood up and recited a Cadou poem. It was a moment that quickly entered the official "life." A "stupefying" moment, Bergé says—and what stupefied him most was that there was "nothing *in* Cadou" for François Mitterrand. "Cadou isn't a poet you quote to shock the bourgeoisie or impress the intellectuals," he wrote later, impressed himself. "He wasn't Saint-John Perse . . . or Chinese poetry." Now he says, "Mitterrand and me! We became very good friends. *Voilà!*"

Actually, they had a lot in common. They were two boys from the provinces, and, as a friend of Bergé's once put it, "those people don't speak English well, they don't speak German, they're very local." Mitterrand's father worked as a stationmaster in Charente; he and Bergé had come to Paris with the same longings and the same resentments, and in the end the French President, who liked to receive his visitors at a Boule desk, in front of a priceless Aubusson, leafing through Montaigne, was not so different from Bergé in the matter of self-invention. Even in his nationalizing mood, he had a weakness—a fatal weakness, given the scandals that plague him now—for the self-made rich. He was drawn to men like Bergé, who had had to hustle their power and promote their *connaissance*—men who "wore" their planes and paintings and châteaux, like a plain woman in a Saint Laurent, with a vanity so prickly and intense that you could call it innocence. He was not rich, but he had the same vanity. Georges-Marc Benamou once described a lecture on the subject of Bosnia that Mitterrand delivered one morning to him and Bergé as "a magisterial geopolitical discourse." That was the kind of friend the President liked. If it is true that in France old money reads the paper at breakfast and new money *discusses* the paper, it isn't surprising that Mitterrand discovered his brother in Bergé, too. They were "two old showmen" or "two old frauds," depending on whom you talk to. (Bergé's friend Sonia Rykiel says that what she likes best about Bergé is his "theatricality"—the way he "plays his part," no matter where it leads him or how much trouble it gets him into—and you hear the same thing said about Mitterrand.) They were complicitous; they were flattering; they respected each other's posturings and inventions. It is hard to imagine either of them interrupting the other in the middle of a magisterial discourse to say "Come off it!"—though in Mitterrand's case it might have been better for France if *someone* had. Mitterrand had his Montaigne, and Bergé had his collection of vintage Callas, and people who saw them together, lunching on Sundays at L'Assiette, or walking along the Left Bank quais, never doubted that they had come to be useful, even necessary, to each other in ways that no one here had expected.

It is not so hard to see what first attracted Mitterrand to Bergé, or why he encouraged his attentions. Bergé was simply the left's most conspicuous patron. (The list of his charities is enormous, and by now it includes not only ARCAT-SIDA and France-Libertés but SOS-Racisme, the Weizmann Institute of Science, and the Chinese House of Democracy.) It was said in Paris that he "ran French clothes." His company alone brought in half a billion dollars a year, and he was the power behind the Chambre Syndicale de la Haute Couture and the Chambre Syndicale du Prêt-à-Porter des Couturiers et des Créateurs de Mode (where nobody called him *le parfumeur*), and the money behind a magazine and the force behind a museum, and, most important, he had perfected the rhetoric of the caviar left. (He talked to me once about whether hanging pictures in museums was "against the people," and said that anyone who couldn't make the connection between hand-beaded jackets and French Socialism was like Louis XVI, at home in Versailles the day the Bastille fell.) Bergé had hitched his wagon to Mitterrand's star, and his moment came in 1988, when Mitterrand was reëlected. By then, Bergé had exhausted his interest in Jack Lang and was said to be angling for Lang's old job of Minister of Culture. It was clear that Mitterrand owed him something important, but if he wanted Culture he wasn't getting Culture, for the simple reason that Lang was getting it again. Mitterrand gave him the Opéra-Bastille instead.

THE Marquis de Sade, who was a prisoner in the Bastille in 1789, had just got out when the prison fell to the mob, on July 14th, and he had managed to leave with the manuscript of "The Secret History of Isabelle of Bavaria"—which Pierre Bergé owns now. It is one of the treasures in Bergé's new apartment, on the Rue Bonaparte, along with the copies of "Madame Bovary" that Flaubert signed for Victor Hugo ("*souvenirs et hommages*") and George Sand ("*hommage d'un inconnu*") and the apple-green eighteenth-century Chinese *papier peint* that (he likes to tell you) once hung in Mona Bismarck's Palm Beach mansion. The manuscript may end up as his own best souvenir of that blighted site, which fell to "the people" and ended up as a "people's opera" that none of the people could afford. The not so secret history of the Opéra-Bastille began on January 13, 1989, the day Pierre Bergé fired Daniel Barenboim, the music and artistic director of the new Opéra, giving as his reason Barenboim's high salary and his choice of a "not popular" program. (He meant Mozart and Wagner.) Barenboim told me then, echoing Bergé's friends, that Bergé was "tired of being a businessman to someone else's 'artist' "—he said that Bergé wanted to choose everything himself. And Bergé never denied it. It was another huge moment for him. He had finally separated from Saint Laurent, and was living at the Lutétia and looking for an apartment. He had a new lover—a young American landscape architect—and a new politics, and he wanted a new life, his own life. "You know, when you meet, when you work with someone like Yves, it's a full-time job," he said, over baby artichokes and salmon, the day he showed me the apartment. (It was, for Bergé, an understatement; even now, wherever he is, he calls Saint Laurent every morning and every night.) "Now I live alone. I live here. It's fine. But for years and years I had to support Yves. Support him in the English *and* the French sense. *Voilà!*" And he added, "He's possessive. . . . I had given all my energy to him, and all of a sudden I gave a little bit to Mitterrand, I gave a little bit to Harlem Désir"—the founder of SOS-Racisme—"I gave a little bit to the Opéra. All that, I took from *him*." He says that it wasn't easy, and he's right about that, because the day the Opéra-Bastille opened Saint Laurent broke down, and ended up in the American Hospital. "Yves threw a wobbly," a British writer who knows them both told me. "He didn't show at the collections. He did it to warn Pierre. The wisdom here is that Yves is the fragile partner. Not at all. But this time—for the first time—Pierre didn't dote. It was too important." Bergé says, "For me these things were indispensable."

A few people at the Opéra-Bastille welcomed Bergé. They knew that he wanted power—most Opéra presidents had been decoration, like chairmen of charity balls—but they thought that the man who made half a billion dollars a year for his company would use the power to put *their* company in the black, and keep the bureaucrats and the politicians at bay while Daniel Barenboim turned the Opéra-Bastille into another La Scala or Metropolitan. They thought he was "sensitive" to music, because he worshipped Callas and put the classics on the soundtrack of Saint Laurent's fashion shows. They thought he was going to turn Barenboim into another Saint Laurent. But Bergé's plan was to turn *himself* into a Saint Laurent. Pierre Boulez quit the board of the Opéra-Bastille when Bergé fired Barenboim, and he says now that Bergé had "delusions of grandeur . . . and no sense of the ridiculous." It was a disastrous combination. Bergé's first decision at the Bastille had been to fire the administrative director. Then he fired the technical director. Then he fired Barenboim. And then he cancelled the curtain for the *grande salle;* Issey Miyake had designed it. In his five years at the Opéra, he hired and fired five more administrators and directors, including Dominique Meyer and René Gonzalez—the two men who introduced him to Myung-Whun Chung, who became his music director. Boulez says now, "Bergé was incompetent at the administrative level and still more on the artistic level. The political people kept telling us he knew something. They said, 'But he was in charge of the Musical Mondays at the Athénée.' What he did was engage singers. That's easy: I call, I pay, you come. Musically, he had no idea."

Myung-Whun Chung was thirty-six and conducting with the Saarbrücken Radio Symphony Orchestra and Florence's Maggio Musicale when Bergé met him, early in 1989. Bergé had been searching frantically for somebody to replace Barenboim, and he had been having trouble, since most conductors had agreed with Barenboim when he said he was unprepared to let the head of a dress company tell him whether Pierre Boulez could conduct a "Pelléas" or Herbert von Karajan give a concert. A lot of the music world was boycotting the Bastille in protest, and the list included not only von Karajan and Boulez, who was arguably the most important composer and conductor in France, but Christoph von Dohnányi, Zubin Mehta, Carlo Maria Giulini, and Georg Solti. Bergé offered the job to Chung fifteen minutes into their first talk. He had never heard Chung conduct and, in fact, had never heard of Chung at all until Meyer, who was his general director, and Gonzalez, his artistic director, brought him to Paris to discuss a "Don Carlos" for the new house. (Chung said, sensibly, "We're not ready for 'Don Carlos.' ") Hiring Chung—who had very few operas in his repertory—was what Bergé means by "not having to know a lot to do something." Chung says now, "He took this decision. It was crazy, or courageous, or both."

It may have been Chung who had the

"How is the dollar trading against the Martini today, Jack?"

IN FRONT OF THE CHILDREN

The children will be terrified, we know it.
We remember how it was to see
The bald eyes set in muscle, and the masks
Put back on quickly, never fitting right,
Over the sinew of our parents' faces.

That look, that word, that slow or sudden gesture—
One day the boys and girls will know what happened.
One day they will begin articulately
To gossip among themselves, with God, with strangers,
With the names changed to pronouns for protection.

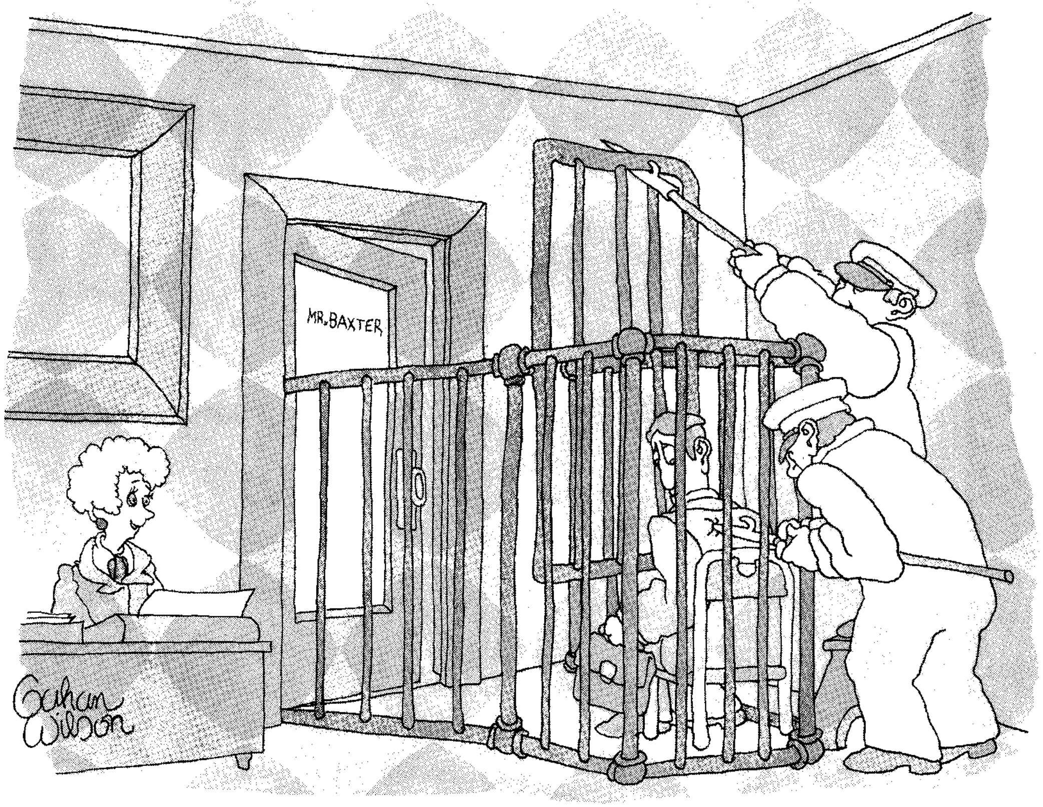
She said it right out loud so we could hear it.
He did that and then he looked at us.

Hearing the phrase in a cafeteria spoken
By one parent to another—"in front of the children"—
I remember how it came to mean what it means,
Because we heard it said and now we say it,
Though everything has been done.

—MARK JARMAN

courage. He went to work against impossible odds. There was the boycott. There was the comical project of a "people's opera." There was the politics of that project. ("Maybe a more careful person would have said, 'Let's wait and see' " is the way Chung puts it.) There was Bergé's reputation, and the suspicion most music people had that Bergé wanted a conductor who was not too strong, not too celebrated—a conductor who would be tractable. Boulez thinks that Chung is a fine musician, but a victim, really, of Bergé's ego, because in the end "he had no one to learn from. He was decent. He was willing to come. Who else would come?" In fact, a lot of people at the Opéra liked him. The people who brought him there still like him, whatever his connection to the man who fired *them*—Meyer, who runs the opera in Lausanne now, calls him "my brother"—and the orchestra loved him. He took a chippy and undisciplined group of musicians and, over five years, turned them into (as Bergé always puts it) "the orchestra that records with Deutsche Grammophon." He gave them the esprit de corps to survive the bad productions and the lacklustre guests and the incessant turnover and Bergé's vanity. It was not, in any event, a vanity that affected them. Bergé had staked his reputation on Chung. "I discovered a genius," he said at every curtain. And if his reputation meant that Chung was a "genius" it also meant that Chung had to be happy and that he had to stay. Chung got a salary that in a few years' time was close to the salary Bergé called "arrogant" when Barenboim was cashing the checks. And eventually Chung was making most of the decisions that Barenboim would have made by contract—except that in Chung's case it was laissez-faire. Bergé couldn't afford to lose his "genius," and his genius was proving himself, and you couldn't blame him for trying. "It was 'Tender Is the Night' at the Opéra-Bastille," a music critic told me. Little by little, the glory (the improving orchestra, the recording contract) was Chung's, and the failures (the strikes, the terrible building, the amateurish productions) were laid at Bergé's feet. The Opéra-Bastille was, with the notable exception of the conductor and his orchestra, a disaster. By 1993, it was losing millions of dollars a year. It was obvious that Bergé would go as soon as the right was back in power; Chung looked to his future and called Jack Lang. He ended up with a "renegotiated" contract, which ran through the year 2000 and paid him a fortune, and which included such a handsome performance fee—five thousand dollars more than the Met pays and twice what Vienna pays—that, even without a boycott, it would be hard to imagine him sharing the podium with many guest conductors. Bergé signed that contract late in December of 1992. Three months later, France had a conservative Prime Minister and, of course, a conservative Minister of Culture. Bergé told the world that his contract with Chung was a "gift to France," but most people thought of it more as his revenge on France, because one of the first things that Jacques Toubon, the new Minister of Culture, did was abolish Pierre Bergé's job, and François Mitterrand did not fight publicly to help him keep it. It was said at the time that France had "helped Bergé enough" by buying Saint Laurent for six hundred and fifty million dollars, but the truth may simply be that Mitterrand didn't want to offend Balladur, who had already replaced Mitterrand's man at Elf Aquitaine with his own chairman. (In France, the President and the Prime Minister co-sign contracts.) Pierre Bergé was dispatched with thanks and ceremony. In February this year, Bergé became Honorary President of the Paris Operas, with the emphasis on "honorary," and the job of running the Opéra-Bastille went to the director of the Geneva Opera—Hugues Gall—whom Bergé himself had once tried to hire. Bergé departed, proclaiming that the Opéra-Bastille was finished, and even that opera in France was finished. But he tried to save Chung. Gall says that he invited Bergé to lunch in March, and at the end of dessert Bergé told him, "If you touch a single hair on Chung's head, you'll have to contend with me."

Chung and Gall did not get on. Gall told people that, after all, "this is not Klemperer in the pit." He accused Chung of wanting to use the Bastille as a "finishing school." (Gall says Chung wanted to stay in Paris for six more years "to build his repertory.") Chung, for his part, started referring to Gall as Kim Il Sung. He accused Gall of high-handedness and contempt—for the orchestra and for him. He was determined to save his contract—he offered to work without salary to save it—and even more determined to save face, a reaction that no one in Paris, where artists are supposed to settle quietly for a large check, seems to have expected. He took the Paris Opéra to court. In the end, he did settle, for nearly two million dollars. He left this fall, after conducting a "Simon Boccanegra" and a Messiaen concerto. (It was Messiaen's last work, and it was dedicated to him.) Bergé was at the concert, and people say there were tears in his eyes.

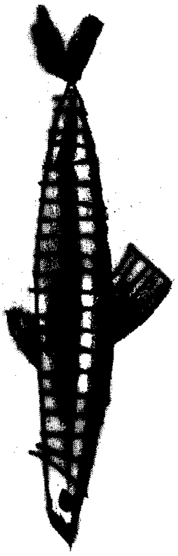


"Mr. Baxter will see you now."

• •

BERGÉ started selling Saint Laurent stock in Switzerland in the summer of 1992. He was in debt by then—mainly because he'd had to spend a hundred million dollars to buy back Carlo De Benedetti's fifteen per cent of the company, three years earlier, when De Benedetti got caught in some debts of his own and was threatening to unload the fifteen per cent himself. ("Pierre felt the moral obligation to ruin himself over De Benedetti," one of his lawyers says. One of his bankers says that morality was maybe part of the story, but the rest of the story was that Bergé thought the shares were going to be worth a lot more money than he had paid.) Bergé had borrowed the money for the buyback—most of it from the merchant bank Neuflize, Schlumberger, et Mallet. And by 1992, he says, "the bankers were squeezing me." The bankers deny this, but the fact remains that Bergé had convinced them that this was a short-term loan. He believed it himself. He was certain that someone would grab the De Benedetti shares in a couple of months; some people say that De Benedetti had promised to deliver a Japanese buyer, who never materialized. Three years later, Bergé was still looking for a buyer. No one wanted the shares, and no one even wanted the company, which, it turned out, he had been trying to sell for at least a year. One way or another, he had to cover his interest. He could have sold stock on the Paris exchange, but not at anything like a profit. In Paris, Saint Laurent was traded at an average of a hundred and fifty shares a day, two hundred at the most, and a run on a hundred and twenty thousand shares (which was what Bergé was offering) would have driven the stock down by at least as much as it eventually fell. On July 31st, Bergé sold sixteen thousand five hundred shares of his own stock through the Banque Morval, in Geneva. On August 7th, he sold another sixteen thousand five hundred shares, through the Geneva branch of the Banque Rothschild. On September 11th, he sold eighty-five thousand shares of Saint Laurent's stock and two thousand more of his own, through the Bank Julius Baer. They made, all told, about eighteen million dollars—nearly a million more than the market price, which at the time of the sales averaged about eight hundred francs a share. Ten days later, the company released its semiannual report, and the price of a share collapsed to five hundred and thirty francs.

The laws on insider trading are vague in France. The Commission des Opérations de Bourse, which is France's version of a Securities and Exchange Commission, had rarely enforced them with any enthusiasm until it made a case against Bergé. Nor had it enforced the law that made it illegal to trade stocks listed on the Paris exchange outside the exchange—a law that dated from Vichy and had been drafted to control capital flight in wartime France. Bergé, in any case, claims that, not being a "businessman," he knew nothing about those laws. The first news he had of charges against him came from Mitterrand. "The president of the COB . . . had been to see Mitterrand," he told me, repeating what he says the President told him. "And he had said to him, 'Monsieur le Président, I'm coming to tell you this because it's about one of your friends, Pierre Bergé. We have a problem. . . . But there's nothing in it. It's of no importance. It's going to end very quickly.' " The President wasn't worried—the COB had been pleasingly discreet when it came to the President's friends—and Bergé certainly wasn't worried. But in May this year the Paris courts opened an investigation. Bergé was charged with violation of the old stock-exchange law—the COB had already fined him for that violation—and for insider trading. He was charged, specifically, with having received reports of serious losses in the perfume division of Saint Laurent only a week before he made his first Swiss sale. Jean-Francis Bretelle, his general director, was charged with him. Saint Laurent was not. (The examining judge agreed wholeheartedly with Saint Laurent when the designer said he was "financially incompetent." Bergé had power of attorney, and apparently no one had even bothered to tell Saint Laurent about the stock sales.) Bergé is waiting to hear whether the charges will be upheld and he will go to trial, and the examining judge, David Peyron, isn't talking. ("Any dossier but this!" Peyron said when I asked to see him.) Bergé insists that he did nothing wrong. He blames the people at Neuflize who handled the sale for "not advising me." (According to one story, it was the people at Neuflize who supplied the COB with Bergé's name; COB investigators had been checking the Paris banks to see if any large blocks of Saint Laurent had changed hands before its semiannual report was published, and, the story goes, someone at Neuflize said yes.) The bank claims now that it played no part in the sale beyond an "ordinary intermediary's part"—meaning it transferred money and took a transfer commission. Bergé claims that it took a "huge negotiating commission." His lawyers are arguing that, in any event, Bergé is innocent. The sale was in Switzerland, and, from the lawyers' point of view, French securities law does not apply in Switzerland, and, even if it did apply, it allows for private, "person to person" transactions; the term in French law is *personnes physiques*. The problem, of course, is that nobody can, or will, identify the particular *personnes physiques* who bought eighteen million dollars' worth of Saint Laurent in Switzerland. The court maintains that three Swiss banks are not "people," and Bergé maintains that they were acting for people—as they obviously were. The Swiss are under no legal obligation to disclose who their clients are, and people with eighteen million dollars in Swiss banks are not usually the sort of clients who would disclose their identities, either. Certainly they have not come forward to defend Bergé (though, as Bergé insists in every interview, they have not complained, either). I talked to several banking and securities experts about the case, and most of them had a certain sympathy for Bergé; they thought he had been targeted "politically" for what was, after all, a fairly common French business practice. There is a certain *mani pulite* enthusiasm in the courts here now, and, given the number of Socialist financial scandals breaking lately, some of it clearly has had to do with French justice getting ready for the *après-Mitterrand*—demonstrating to the right that it has done its job. Bergé himself says, "I don't want to say it's a case manipulated by the right. I don't think so. But I will say it's a case that people have reason to believe will please the right." He thinks—and the people I talked to about it agree with him—that if he hadn't been close to François Mitterrand the case would have been good for two or three lines in the newspaper and forgotten in a day. But those people had speculated, like everyone else, about who Bergé's buyers were, and some of them came to the conclusion that Bergé had money abroad and had probably sold the stocks to himself to get that money into France. Bergé says, "Bullshit!" He told me, "You know, there's a Chinese proverb: A lie repeated a thousand times becomes a truth."



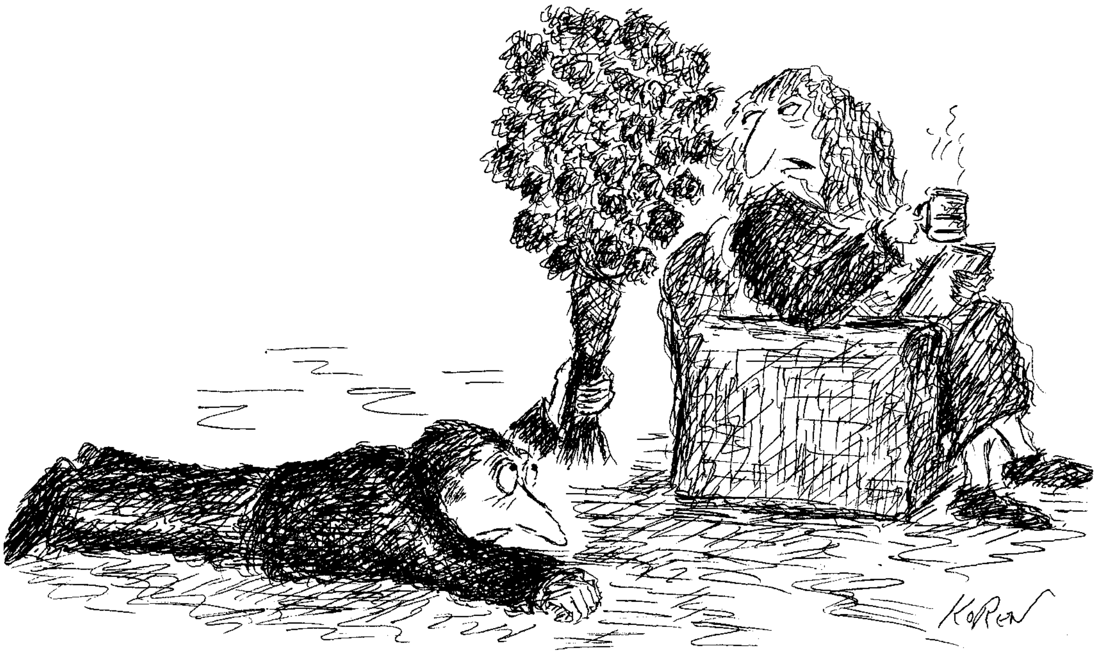
THE real mystery, of course, is not who bought the stocks (and, in any event, neither the COB nor the court, nor even the police, has access to that information). The mystery is how Bergé managed to sell his company to the French state, and what the role of the President of France was in that sale. Jean-Pierre Halbron, the man at the investment bank Wasserstein Perella with the job of finding a buyer for Saint Laurent, approached Elf Sanofi at the end of July, 1992—a couple of days before Bergé started selling stock in Switzerland. By then, according to the various press reports, the list of companies that had considered buying and passed included Cartier, L'Oréal, Colgate-Palmolive, Unilever, Seibu, and, once, even Sanofi itself. No one doubted the value of Saint Laurent—although its ready-to-wear was moving slowly, and Saint Laurent's health was clearly the subject of a lot of speculation. What stopped everyone was Bergé's conditions: Halbron told me that Bergé was demanding a billion dollars in cash and stock, and he wanted to keep absolute control of his company after it was sold. Halbron had gone back to Sanofi with an offer that involved only the old De Benedetti shares. He says that Sanofi was interested in buying those shares, but that Jean-François DeHecq, who ran Sanofi, was leaving on vacation. They agreed to talk in September, and Halbron gave Bergé the news. Negotiations began. By December, according to one report, DeHecq had a go-ahead from Loïk Le Floch-Prigent, the president of the state petroleum company, Elf Aquitaine, which owned sixty per cent of Sanofi, and that go-ahead included not only the De Benedetti shares; Sanofi offered to buy out Saint Laurent, lock, stock, and perfume barrel. Le Floch-Prigent was Mitterrand's man at Elf Aquitaine. He looked after the President's political interests. He put Elf Aquitaine into East Germany when the President got interested in East German affairs, and even into North Korea when France decided to trade with North Korea. He announced the purchase of Yves Saint Laurent in January last year, two months before the election that put the right in power.

People who assume that the deal for Saint Laurent was struck by a phone call from François Mitterrand—and for a while they seemed to include the people at *Le Monde*, which reported that "rarely has a seller received so many benefits . . . and a buyer made so many concessions"—do not really credit the byzantine courtesies of Mitterrand's circle. If you are a Le Floch-Prigent, and in the circle, you don't need to call the President and ask what pleases him, and the President doesn't need to call you; you know what will please him, and the President knows you know. Many people here doubt whether Saint Laurent would belong to Sanofi today if Bergé and Le Floch-Prigent hadn't both been in that circle, but the truth is that for twelve years the will of the President had hung in the air over Paris, like pollution on a hot, damp day, and sooner or later everybody felt it. Bergé maintains that Sanofi was eager to acquire Saint Laurent—despite the fact that after Elf Aquitaine and Sanofi were privatized by the right this year, DeHecq announced that he was going to "concentrate on pharmaceuticals" and put most of his other perfume labels on the market. Bergé calls any suggestion that Sanofi was not eager "bullshit." ("*C'est du bullshit!*" is one of his favorite phrases.) He told me one day that the deal was made "with DeHecq sitting on the sofa where you're sitting" and smiling "a huge smile." And I believe that DeHecq was smiling, since, whatever the requisite courtesies, DeHecq wanted a good deal for himself. DeHecq played hard ball that day, telling Bergé the sale was dead. And so, contrary to *Le*

Monde, Bergé did end up making a few concessions. Bergé didn't get his billion dollars; he sold for six hundred and fifty million. He didn't get his cash; he traded the stocks he controlled—he and Saint Laurent owned forty-three per cent of their company—for Elf Aquitaine stocks. He didn't get to run the company; he got to run only the clothing part of the company, which accounted for less than a fifth of its earnings and, in any event, was not something that people at a pharmaceutical company—even a pharmaceutical company like Sanofi, with "designer perfumes"—were apt to know anything about running themselves. But Sanofi was eager enough to call in the Saint Laurent stock at eight hundred and fifty francs a share—or a hundred and thirty-five per cent of its market value. Bergé's (and Saint Laurent's) own stock-swap profit amounted to a hundred and forty-four million dollars. Each of them is getting two million dollars a year in salary for the next six years. And the President is pleased.

This September, Bergé flew to New York with Saint Laurent to launch the first Saint Laurent perfume from Sanofi. The perfume is called Champagne—but not in France, where the champagne producers sued, and the perfume is sold without a name. It is, even nameless, the fastest-selling new perfume in Paris, but it does not, as they say in the fashion world, "say" Saint Laurent to me. The bottle is tasteless. It looks, vaguely, like a champagne cork, or, to quote the promotion handout, "an alliance of finely cut crystal and beaten gold, circled with genuine cork wire." And as for the smell—which seems to include nectarine, anise, crushed mint, and lychee along with the patchouli, the oakmoss, and the roses—it has not, despite the sales figures, persuaded any of my friends to accept the quarter ounce I received from Bergé's press secretary on the afternoon of September 1st. I should say, for the record, that Champagne was the only "gift" I took (or solicited, or was offered) at her office, although I would have been hard put to it to refuse the dark-blue crêpe Saint Laurent I saw on the runway at the couture showings in July. It was easier to refuse an offer that Bergé made me himself. He called, the night after he showed me his apartment, with an urgent message, and when I returned his call he invited me to write a column for *Globe.* When I told him I already had a job, at *The New Yorker,* he said, "This has nothing to do with *The New Yorker.*"

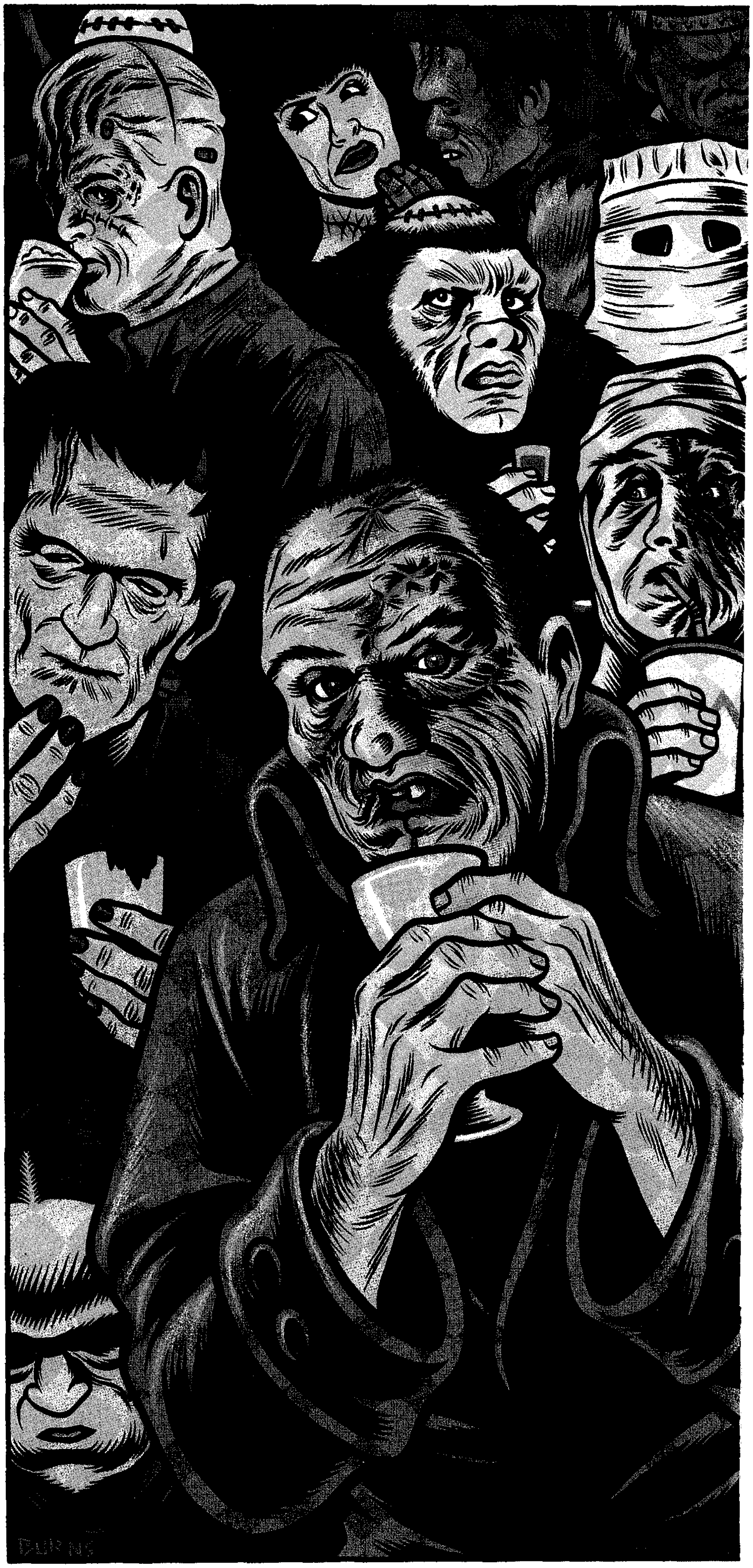
PIERRE BERGÉ turned sixty-four this week. He is a Scorpio, as Helmut Newton says, and it may be that to understand him at all you have to think of the fable of the scorpion and the frog—the one where the scorpion begs a ride from the frog and, halfway across the river, stings him, explaining, as they both drown, "I couldn't help it, it's in my nature." In some ways, Bergé is losing the "life" he invented so single-mindedly to his own sting. The future of his magazine is uncertain. He has lost his opera. He is losing his President. (When I asked how he felt about the revelations concerning Mitterrand and Vichy, his voice rose, and he delivered a tirade that began, "Braudel, the great Braudel, has told us that history is horizontal," and lasted until I realized that Bergé, in his own way, was actually at a loss for words.) He lost the fashion syndicate he had helped create, because of a silly argument over the dates of ready-to-wear collections, and for a while—it was in 1992—he lost the fashion press by launching a young designer named Robert Merloz the week that Saint Laurent was presenting his haute couture. (Saint Laurent dispatched his mother to the Merloz show, where she reported that, at least, "no one can claim the boy has copied anything at all from Yves Saint Laurent.") He has sold his company, and, though the deal he cut has greatly increased his fortune and left him running Saint Laurent Couture until he retires, at seventy, the rest of the operation will now be somebody else's taste and talent. He had no choice, really, except to sell Yves Saint Laurent. There is no one to inherit it, and, given that Saint Laurent describes himself as the last couturier, it is fairly certain that la haute couture at the House of Saint Laurent will end with him. It may be that, in Robert Merloz, Bergé was hoping for a last Rimbaud, a last great marriage of mind and talent, and that when Merloz turned out to be one of the Sunday painters, like Bernard Buffet, Bergé lost heart, and lost interest in keeping the house his own. Alain Coblence told me, "Pierre is a lover, a believer. You have to understand that. The man, the talent—that's what ignites him. Otherwise, it's just business and he doesn't care." Bergé says this himself. "I could never have been a businessman if it were a matter of making armchairs" is the way he puts it. It may be that he sold the company Saint Laurent because the man Saint Laurent was not in a state of mind or health to reassure him that it wouldn't be armchairs. He said ruefully, one day when he had spent three hours mixing the music (Wagner and Berlioz) for the July collection, "It isn't

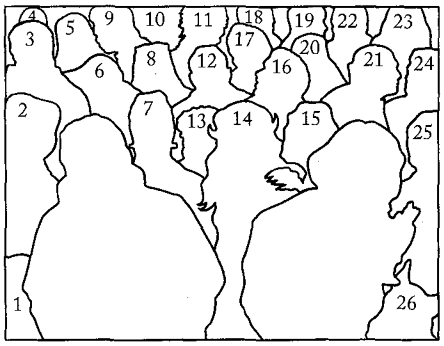


"Don't you dare apologize to me!"

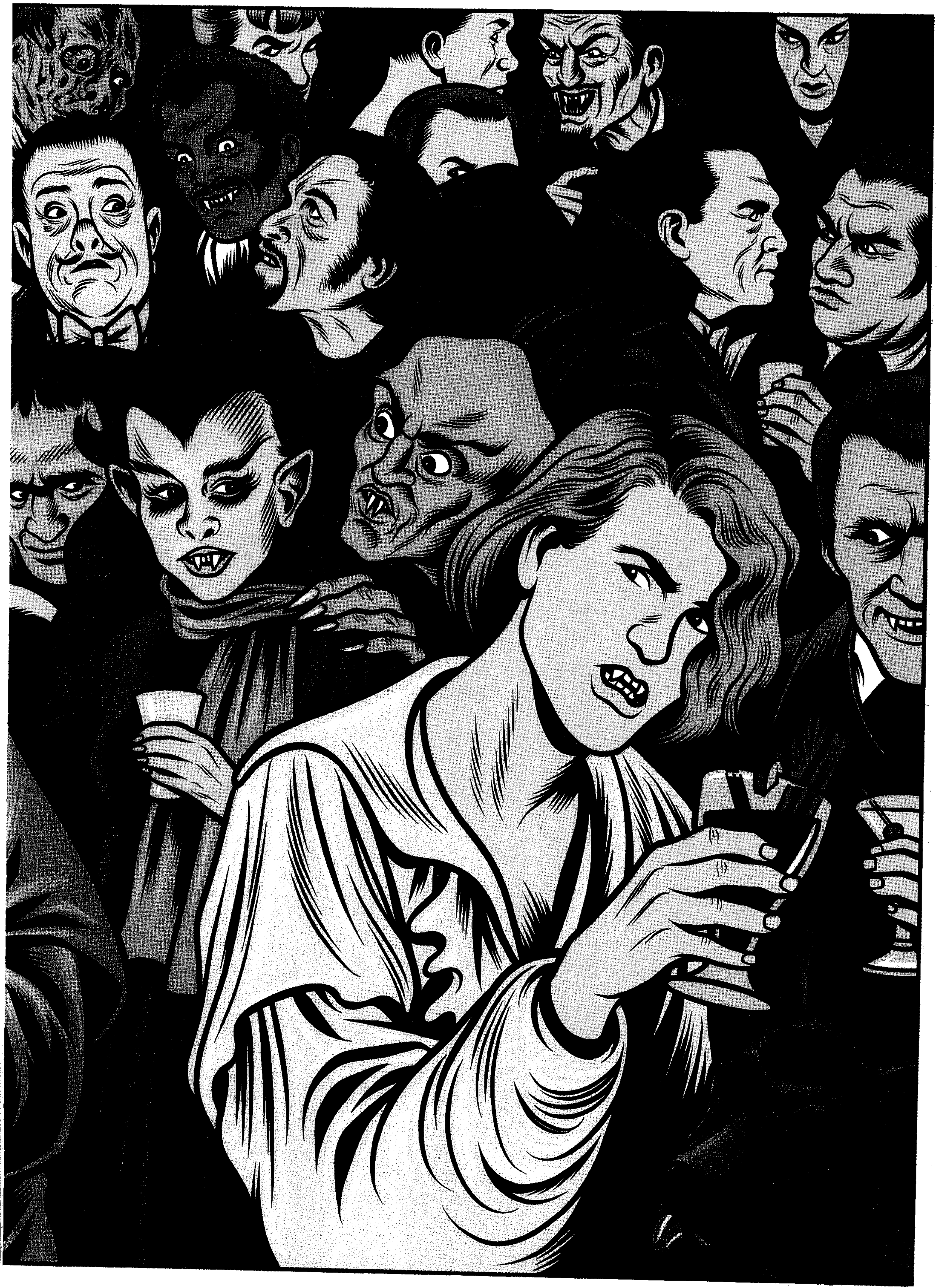
the Opéra, it's just a fashion show." It was the closest I had ever heard him come to dropping his defenses. He knows that a lot of the people who flattered him so extravagantly when Mitterrand's court was the place to be in Paris are waiting now to watch him fall. I mentioned this to a Paris friend, who told me to remember that by now the caviar left is a little like Castel's, the Left Bank club we all went to in the nineteen-eighties. A few old regulars are faithful, but the moment is over, and the new regulars are "B-list people." For Frenchmen, in the end, the only power is posterity, and, if most of the world would say that Bergé, at sixty-four, has a cushy—even an enviable—life, the French would understand that he is a little like last year's dress. Pierre Bergé is going out of style. ♦

GHOULS' NIGHT OUT





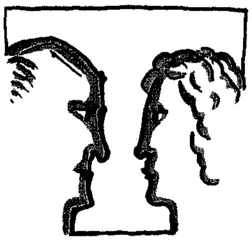
Robert De Niro and Tom Cruise take their places in the Hollywood horror show, joining specimens from: 1. "Torticola vs. Frankensberg"; 2. "Frankenstein"; 3. "Lady Frankenstein"; 4. "Jesse James Meets Frankenstein's Daughter"; 5. "Frankenhooker"; 6. "Frankenstein and the Monster from Hell"; 7. "Frankenstein's Daughter"; 8. "Frankenstein 1970"; 9. "Frankenstein Conquers the World"; 10. "Dracula vs. Frankenstein"; 11. "I Was a Teenage Frankenstein"; 12. "Son of Dracula"; 13. "Casanova Frankenstein"; 14. "Blood of Dracula"; 15. "Nosferatu the Vampire"; 16. "Dracula vs. Frankenstein"; 17. "Blacula"; 18. "Brides of Dracula"; 19. "Andy Warhol's Dracula"; 20. "Plan 9 from Outer Space"; 21. "Dracula"; 22. "Billy the Kid vs. Dracula"; 23. "Mark of the Vampire"; 24. "Blood of the Vampire"; 25. "Horror of Dracula"; 26. "Dracula's Dog."



FICTION

HOUSE HUNTING

BY MICHAEL CHABON



THE house was all wrong for them. An ivy-covered Norman country manor with an eccentric roofline, a fat, pointed tower, and latticed mullions in the downstairs windows, it sat perched on the northwest shoulder of Lake Washington, a few blocks to the east of the house in which Christy had grown up. The neighborhood was subject to regular invasion by armies of gardeners, landscape contractors, and installers of genuine Umbrian granite paving stone, but nevertheless it was obvious the house had been got up to be sold. The blue paint on the shutters looked slick and wet, fresh black mulch churned around the pansies by the driveway, and the immense front lawn had been polished to a hard shine. The listing agent's sign was a discreet red-and-white escutcheon, on a black iron stake, that read simply, "Herman Silk," with a telephone number, in an elegant sans-serif type.

"This?" Daniel Diamond said, his heart sinking in a kind of giddy fizz within him. Although they had all the windows open, Mr. Hogue's car was choked with the smell of his cologne, a harsh extract of wintergreen and brine which the realtor had been emitting more fiercely, like flop sweat, the nearer they got to the house. It was aggravating Daniel's allergies, and he wished he'd thought to pop a Claritin before leaving the apartment that morning. "This is the one?"

"That's the one," Hogue said, sounding weary, as though he had spent the entire day dragging them around town in his ancient Mercedes sedan, showing them one perfectly good house after another, each of which they had rejected with the most arbitrary and picayune of rationales. In fact, it was only ten o'clock in the morning, and this was the very first place he'd brought them to see. Bob Hogue was a leathery man of indefinite middle age, wearing a green polo shirt, tan chinos, and a madras blazer in the palette favored by manufacturers of the cellophane grass that goes into Easter baskets. His rectilinear wrinkles, his crewcut, his chin like a couple of knuckles, his nose lettered with minute red script, gave him the look of a jet pilot gone to seed. "What's the matter with it? Not good enough for you?"

Daniel and his wife, Christy Kite, looked at each other across the back of Christy's seat—Christy could never ride in the rear of any vehicle without experiencing acute motion sickness.

"Well, it's awfully big, Mr. Hogue," she said, tentatively, leaning to look past the realtor at the house. Christy had gone to college in Palo Alto, where she studied French and led cheers for a football team that lost all the big games. She had the Stanford graduate's aggressive nice manners, and the eyes of a cheerleader atop a struggling pyramid of girls. She had been the Apple Queen of Roosevelt High. From her mother, she had learned to try very hard to arrange everything in life with the flawlessness of a photograph in a house-and-garden magazine, and then to take it just as hard when the black plums went uneaten in the red McCoy bowl and filled the kitchen with a stink of garbage, or when the dazzling white masses of Shasta daisies in the back yard were eaten by aphids.

"Yeah, I don't know, Mr. Hogue," Daniel said. "I think—"

"Oh, but it is beautiful," Christy said. She furrowed her brow and narrowed her eyes. She poked her tongue gamely from a corner of her mouth. She was trying her hardest, Daniel could see, to imagine living in that house with him. House hunting, like all their efforts to improve things between them—the counselling, the long walks, the watching of a movie called "Spanking Brittany Blue"—had been her idea. But after a moment her face went slack, and her eyes sought Daniel's, and in them he saw, for the first time since their wedding the summer before last, the lustre of real despair, as if she feared they would find no home for their marriage, not in Seattle or anywhere in the world. Then she shrugged and reached up to retie her scarf, a sheer white piece of Italian silk patterned with lemons and limes. She opened her door, and started to get out of the car.

"Just a minute, you," Hogue said, taking her arm. She fell back into the car at once, and favored Hogue with her calmest and most obliging Apple Queen smile, but Daniel could see her nostrils flaring like a rabbit's. "Don't be in such a rush," Hogue went on irritably. "You're always running off half-cocked." He leaned over to open the glove compartment and rummaged around inside it until he found a package of Pall Malls. He pushed in the cigarette lighter and tapped one end of a wrinkled cigarette against the dashboard. "You can't rush into a thing like this. It could turn out to be a terrible mistake."

At once, like people trapped in an empty bus station with a fanatical pamphleteer, Daniel and Christy agreed with Hogue.

"We're careful people," Christy said. Carefully, she averted her face from Hogue's gaze, and gave her husband a brief grimace of not quite mock alarm.

"Careful people with limited resources," Daniel said. He hadn't decided whether to tell Christy that, two days earlier, her father had taken him to lunch at the University Club and offered to make a present of any reasonably priced house they might choose. After the war, Mr. Kite had founded an industrial advertising agency, landed the accounts of several major suppliers to Boeing, and then, at the age of sixty-two, sold his company for enough money to buy a condominium on the ninth hole at Salishan and a little cabaña down on the beach at Cabo San Lucas. Daniel, a graduate student in astronomy at U.W., where Christy taught psychology, didn't have any money of his own. Neither, for that matter, did his father, who, in the years of Mr. Kite's prosperity, had run two liquor stores, a printshop, and a five-and-dime into the ground, and now lived with Daniel's mother amid the coconut palms and peeling white stucco of an internment camp for impoverished old people not far from Delray Beach. "Maybe we ought to just—"

Christy cut him off with a sharp look. The lighter popped out, and Hogue reached for it, and they watched in uncomfortable silence as, hands shaking, he tried to light his cigarette. After several seconds and a great deal of fearsome wheezing, the few frayed strands of tobacco he had succeeded in getting lit fell out of the end of the cigarette, landed in his lap, and began to burn his chinos. He slapped at his thigh, scowling all the while at the house, as if it, or its occupants, were somehow responsible for his ignition.

"Maybe we ought to take a look at it, Mr. Hogue," Christy said.

Mr. Hogue looked back over at the house. He took a deep breath.

"I guess we'd better," he said. He opened his door and got out of the car, eying the house warily.

Daniel and Christy lingered a moment by the Mercedes, whispering.

"He looks like he's seen a ghost," Christy observed, buttoning the top button of her white cardigan. "He looks awful."

"Did he look better at our wedding?"

Daniel understood that Bob Hogue had been among the guests at their wedding, the summer before last, but his recollection of that remote afternoon had grown vague. In fact, the great event itself had, at the time, unfolded around him at a certain vague remove. He had felt not like the star attraction, along with Christy, of a moderately lavish civil ceremony held on the slope of a Laurelhurst lawn so much as like a tourist, lost in a foreign country, who had turned in to an unfamiliar street and found himself swallowed up in the clamor of a parade marking the feast day of some silken and barbarous religion. He remembered this Bob Hogue and his handsome wife, Monica, no better than he remembered Bill and Sylvia Bond, Roger and Evelyn Holsapple, Ralph and Betsy Lindstrom, or any of the three hundred other handsome old friends of his in-laws who had made up the bulk of the wedding guests. He knew that Hogue was a college chum and occasional golfing partner of his father-in-law's, and he was aware that an acrid ribbon of bad news was sent curling toward the ceiling of any room in which Bob Hogue's name was brought up, though he could never keep straight whether Hogue had married the lush, or fathered the Scientologist, or lost a piece of his left lung to cancer.

"To tell you the truth," Christy said, "I don't remember him at our wedding. I don't really know the Hogues very well. I just kind of remember how he looked when I was little."

"Well, no wonder he looks awful, then." He stepped back to admire her in her smart green Vittadini dress. Her bare legs were new shaven, so smooth that they glinted in the sun, and through the gap in her open-toed flats you could see a couple of slender toes, nails painted pink. "You, however, look very nice."

She smiled, and her pupils dilated, flooding her eyes with a darkness. "I liked what we did last night."

"So did I," Daniel said at once. Last night they had lain on top of their down comforter, with their heads at opposite ends of their bed, and massaged each other's feet with fragrant oil, by candlelight, while Al Green cooed to them in the background. This was an activity recommended to them by their couples therapist as a means of generating a nonthreatening sense of physical closeness between them. Daniel blushed now at this recollection, which he found painful and sad. To his great regret there was nothing even remotely erotic to him about feet, his wife's or anyone's. You might have permitted him to anoint the graceful foot of Semiramis or Hedy Lamarr, and he would not have popped a boner. He slid a hand up under the hem of Christy's dress and tried to skate his index and middle fingers up the smooth, hard surface of her right thigh, but she moved, and somehow Daniel's entire hand ended up thrust between her legs, as though he were attempting to hold open the doors of an elevator.

"Ouch," said Christy. "You don't have to be so rough."

"Sorry," said Daniel.

They started up the driveway after Mr. Hogue.

"Who's Herman Silk?" Daniel said, as they passed the discreet little sign.

"Who's Herman Silk?" Hogue wove a puzzling thread of bitterness into the question. "That's a good one." Daniel wondered if he should recognize the name from some local real-estate scandal or recent round of litigation in the neighborhood. He tried to keep track of such mainstays of Kite-family conversation, but it was hard, in particular since they were generally served up, in the Kite house, with liberal amounts of Canadian Club and soda. "That's very funny," said Hogue.

When they got to the front door, Mr. Hogue could not seem to work the combination of the lockbox there. He tried several different permutations of what he thought was the code and then, in a display of bafflement at once childish and elderly, reached into his pocket and attempted to stick one of his own keys in the lock.

"Funny," he muttered, as this hopeless stratagem in due course failed. "Herman Silk. Ha."

Christy looked at Daniel, her eyes filled with apology for having led them into this intensifying disaster. Daniel smiled and gave his shoulders an attenuated shrug, characteristic of him, that did not quite absolve her of blame.

"Uh, why don't you tell me the combination, Mr. Hogue?" Christy suggested, yanking the lockbox out of his hands. She, who was willing to lie for hours listening to Reverend Al while Daniel worked over her oiled foot like a desperate man trying to summon a djinn, was finally losing patience. Daniel's heart was stirred by a wan hope that very soon now they would have to give up on old Mr. Hogue, on buying a house, on Christy's entire project of addressing and finding solutions for their problem. Now that things were starting to go so wrong, he hoped they could just return to their apartment on Queen Anne Hill and resume ignoring their problem, the strategy he preferred.

Hogue fed Christy the combination one digit at a time, and she worked the tumblers. She gave a sharp tug on the lockbox. It held firm.

"Are you sure that's the right number?" she said.

"Of course it's the right number," Hogue snapped. All at once his face had turned as red as the wrapper of his Pall Malls. One would have said that he was furious with Christy and Daniel, that he had had his fill of the unreasonable demands and the cruel hectoring to which they had subjected him over the last forty years. "Why are you always pestering me

Bernard Schoenbaum

"How do you ever expect to get anywhere with such a tiny vocabulary?"

• •

like that? Don't you know I'm doing my best?"

Daniel and Christy looked at each other. Christy bit her lip, and Daniel saw that she had been afraid something like this might happen. A sudden clear memory of Mr. Hogue at the wedding returned to him. There had been a series of toasts after dinner, and Mr. Hogue had risen to say a few words. His face had gone full of blood and he looked unsteady on his feet. The woman sitting beside him, Monica Hogue—slender, youthful, with red spectacles and a cute gray bob—had given his elbow a discreet tug. For a moment the air under the great white tent had grown still and sour, and the guests had looked down at their plates.

"Well, sure we do, Mr. Hogue," Christy said. "We know you've been doing a great job for us, and we really appreciate it. Don't we, Daniel?"

"Well, yeah. We really do."

The blood went out of Hogue's face.

"Excuse me," he said. "I—I'm sorry, you kids. I'm not feeling very well today." He ran a hand across the close-cropped top of his head. "Here. Let me see something. There used to be—" He backed down the steps and, half crouched, hands on his knees, scanned the ground under the long rhododendron hedges that flanked the door. He moved crabwise along the row of shrubbery until he disappeared around the corner of the house.

"I remember him now," said Daniel.

Christy laughed, through her nose, and then sadly shook her head.

"I hope he's all right."

"I think he just needs a drink."

"Hush, Daniel, please."

"Do you remember the toast he gave at the wedding?"

"Did he make a toast?"

"It was 'To our wives and lovers, may they never meet.' "

"I don't remember that."

"Pretty fucking appropriate wedding-toast material, I thought."

"Daniel."

"This is a waste."

"Daniel, please don't say that. We're going to work this all out."

"Christy," Daniel said. "Please don't say that."

"What else can I say?"

"Nothing," Daniel said. "I don't think you know how to say anything else."

"Found it!" Hogue came back around the house toward them, favoring the young couple with his realtor's smile—the smile of someone who knows that he has been discussed unfavorably in his absence. He was brandishing a medium-sized, mottled gray stone, and for a wild instant Daniel thought he intended somehow to smash his way in. But Hogue only turned the stone over, slid aside a small plastic panel that was attached to it, and pulled from its interior a shiny gold key. Then he slipped the false stone into the hip pocket of his jacket.

"Neat little things," he said. He slid the key into the lock without difficulty, and let them into the house. "Don't worry, it's quite all right," he added, when he saw how they were looking at him. "I'll just have to call about the lockbox. Happens all the time. Come on in."

They found themselves in a small foyer with plaster walls that were streaked like thick cake frosting, fir floors, and a built-in hatstand festooned with all manner of hats. Hogue hitched up the back of his trousers and stood looking around, blinking, mouth pinched, expression gone blank. The profusion of hats on the hatstand—three berets in the colors of sherbets, a tweedy homburg, a new-looking Stetson with a snakeskin band, several billed golf caps bearing the crest of Mr. Kite's club—seemed to bewilder him. He cleared his throat, and the young people waited for him to begin his spiel. But Hogue said nothing. Without gesturing for them to follow, he shuffled off into the living room.

It was like a page out of one of Mrs. Kite's magazines, furnished with a crewel love seat, two old-fashioned easy chairs that had been re-covered with pieces of a Persian kilim, a low Moroccan table with a hammered-brass top, an old blue Chinese Deco rug, and a small collection of art books and local Indian basketry, arranged with mock haphazardness on the

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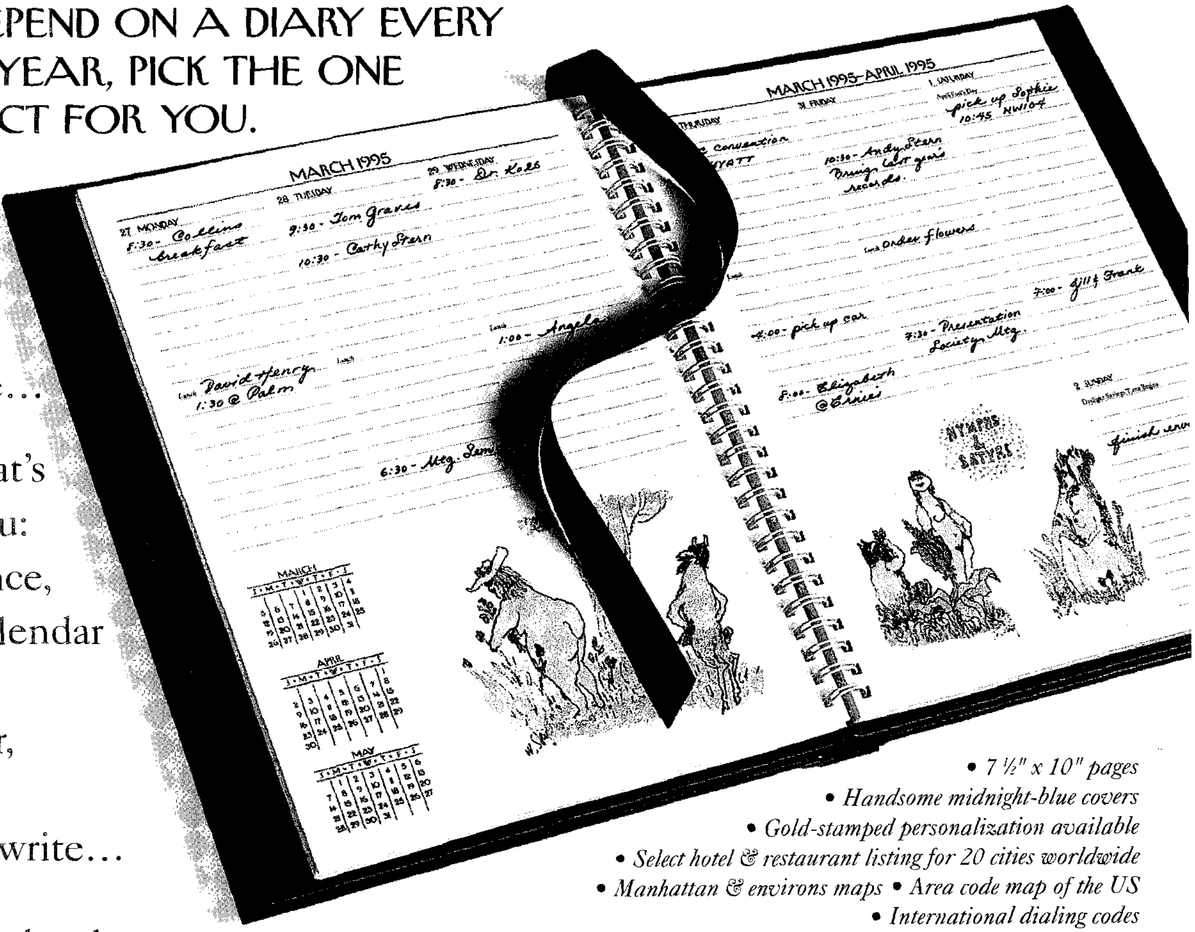
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27 MONDAY
8:30 - Collins breakfast
28 TUESDAY
9:30 - Tom Graves
10:30 - Cathy Stern
29 WEDNESDAY
8:30 - Dr. Kobs
1:00 - Angela
David Henry 1:30 @ Palm
6:30 - Meg. Semi
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THURSDAY
convention
HYATT
31 FRIDAY
10:30 - Andy Stern
Bring last year's records.
Order flowers
4:00 - pick up car
8:00 - Elizabeth @ Chanel
1 SATURDAY
pick up Sophie 10:45 NW104
7:00 - Jill & Frank
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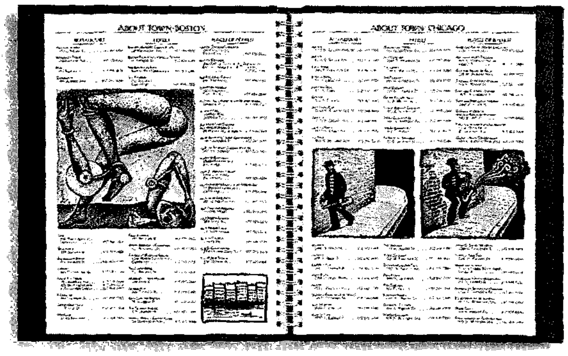
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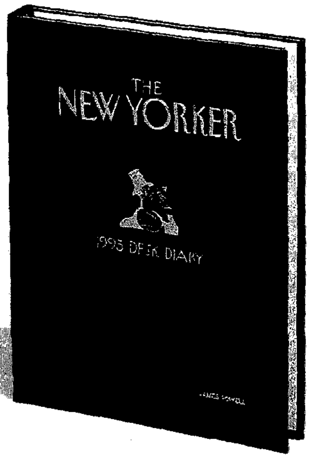
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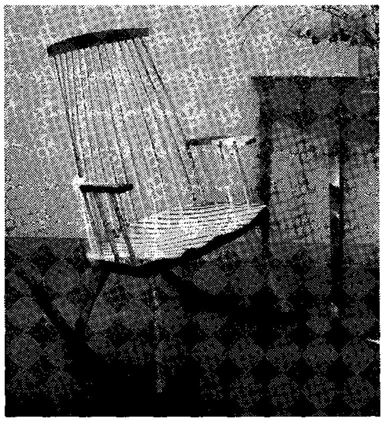

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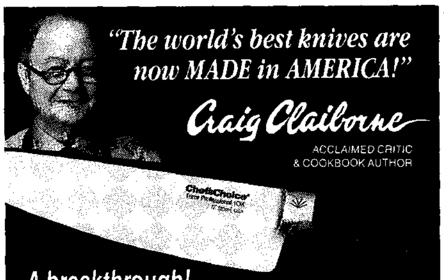

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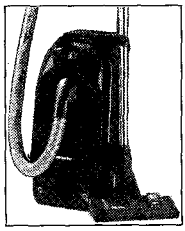

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built-in shelves. The desired effect was doubtless an eclectic yet contemporary spareness, but the room was very large, and to Daniel it just looked emptied.

"Are you all right, Mr. Hogue?" Christy said, elbowing Daniel.

Mr. Hogue stood on the Chinese rug, surveying the living room with his eyes wide and his mouth open, a hand pressed to his midsection as though he had been sandbagged.

"Eh? Oh, why, yes, it's just—they just—they changed things around a little bit," he said. "Since the last time I was here."

From his astonished expression it was hard to believe that Hogue had ever seen the place before. Daniel wondered if Hogue hadn't simply plucked it at random out of a listing book and driven them over here to satisfy some sense of obligation to Christy's parents. Clearly the owners had not been expecting anyone to come through this morning; there was an old knit afghan lying twisted on the love seat, a splayed magazine on one of the chairs, and a half-empty glass of tomato juice on the brass table.

"Mr. Hogue?" said Christy. "Are you sure this is O.K.?"

"Fine," said Hogue. He pointed to a pair of French doors at the far end of the living room. "I believe you'll find the dining room through there." Daniel followed Christy into the dining room, which was cool and shady and furnished with whitewashed birch chairs and a birchwood table with an immense glass top. In the center of the table sat a small black lacquer bowl in which a gardenia floated, its petals scorched at the edges by decay.

"Nice," Daniel said, although he always misgave at the odor of gardenias, which tempted with a promise of apples and vanilla beans but finished in a bitter blast of vitamins and burnt wire.

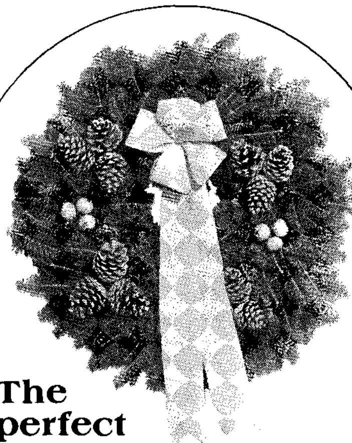
"Come on, Daniel. We can't afford this."

"Did I say we could?"

"Please don't be a bastard."

"Was I being a bastard?"

Christy sighed and looked back toward the living room. Hogue hadn't joined them yet; he seemed to have disappeared. He was probably back in the foyer, Daniel thought, looking around for the fact sheet on the house, so that he could pretend to be knowledgeable about it. Christy lowered her voice and spoke into Daniel's ear. Her breath played



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across the inner hairs of his ear and raised gooseflesh all down his forearms.

"Do you think he's not supposed to be doing this anymore?"

"What do you mean?" Daniel said, taking an involuntary step away from her. Her scarf had come loose at the back, allowing a thick lank strand of her unwashed dark hair to dangle alongside her face. It was not healthy to overwash the hair—that was why she was wearing the jazzy scarf—and Daniel imagined he could still smell smoke on it from the Astronomy Department barbecue they had attended the night before.

"I mean, with the lockbox, and all—do you think he's been disbarred? Or whatever they do to realtors?"

"They make them unreal," Daniel suggested. He reached up and took hold of her scarf, and teased it loose. All of her smoky hair spilled down around her head.

"Why did you do that?" she said.

"I don't know," he admitted. He handed her the scarf, and she bound up her hair once more. "I'll go check on Mr. Hogue."

He went through the French doors back into the living room. Hogue was standing at the far end, where it opened onto the foyer, with his back to Daniel. There were built-in shelves on this side of the room, also, peopled with a sparse collection of small *objets* and half a dozen framed photographs of infants and graduates and an Irish setter in an orange life preserver. As Daniel came in, Hogue was fingering something small and glittering, a piece of crystal or a glass animal. He picked it up, examined it, and then slipped it into the right hip pocket of his jacket.

"Coming," he said, after Daniel, rendered speechless, managed to clear his throat in alarm. Hogue turned, and for an instant, before his face resumed its habitual clench-jawed jet-pilot tautness, he looked grimly, mysteriously pleased with himself, like a man who had just exacted a small and glittering measure of revenge. Then he accompanied Daniel into the dining room, and Daniel tried to think of something plausible to ask him. What did normal husbands say to normal real-estate agents at this stage of the game? It occurred to him that Hogue had not yet mentioned the asking price of the house.

"So what do they want, anyway, Mr. Hogue?" he tried.

"God only knows," Hogue said. He reached down toward the black lacquer

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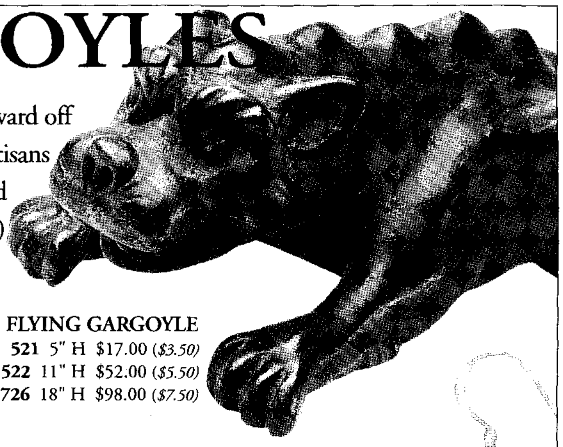

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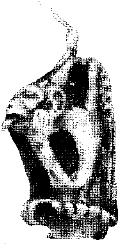

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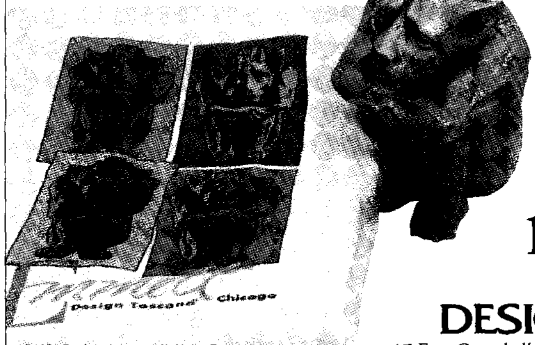

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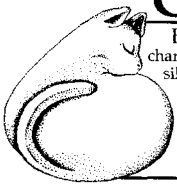

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bowl and picked up the gardenia, holding it by the clipped, dripping stem underneath. He brought it to his nose, took a deep draught of it, and then let out a long artificial sigh of delight. With Daniel looking right at him, he slipped the flower into the pocket of his jacket, too. "Let's have a look at that kitchen, shall we?"

So Daniel followed him into the kitchen, where Christy was exclaiming with a purely formal enthusiasm over the alderwood cabinets, the ceramic stove burners, the wavering light off the lake.

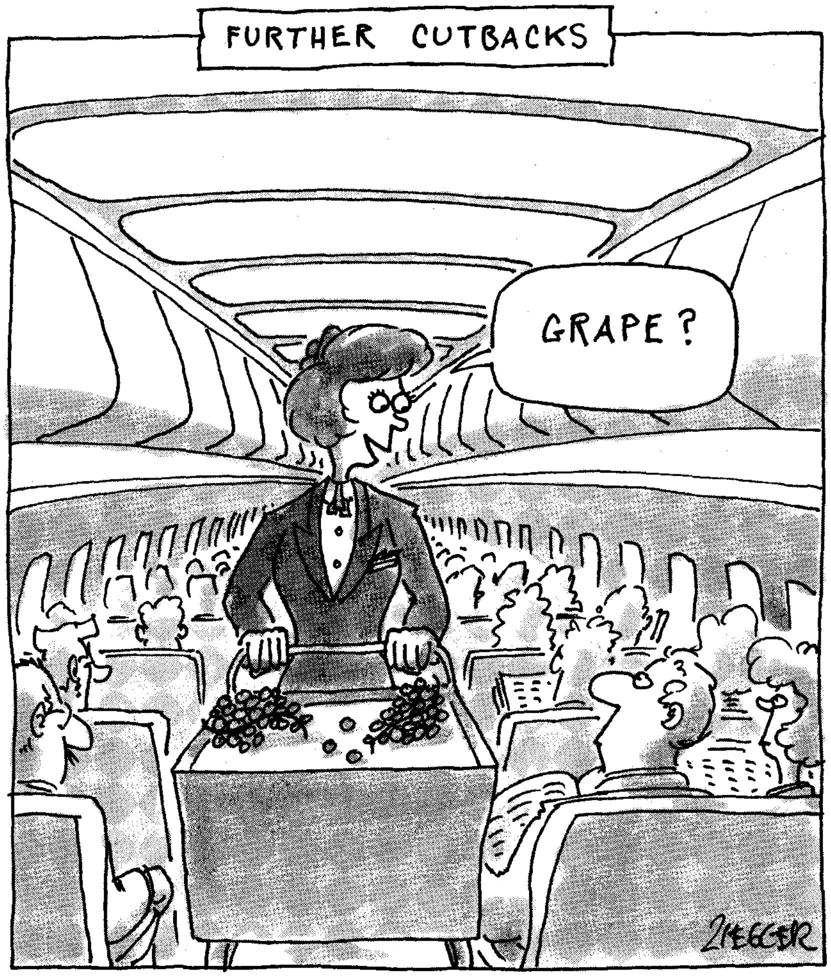
"What a waste, eh?" Hogue said. A dark patch of dampness was spreading across the fabric of his pocket. "They put I don't know how many thousands of dollars into it." He reached over to a sliding rheostat on the wall and made the track lighting bloom and dwindle and bloom. He shook his head. "Now then, this way to the family room. TV room. It amounts to the same thing, doesn't it?"

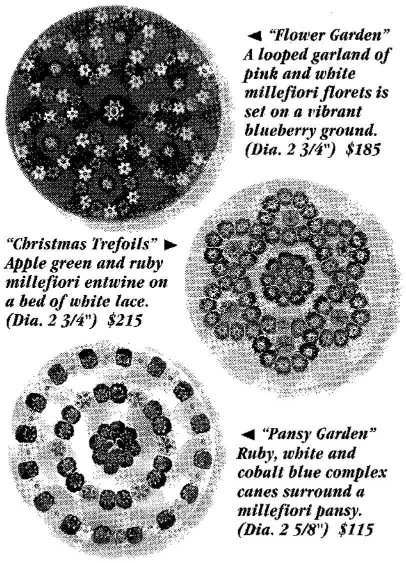
He slid a louvred door aside and went into the next room. Christy gestured to Daniel to come and stand beside her. Daniel looked back at the dining room. A lone leaf spun on the surface of the water in the lacquer bowl.

"Daniel, are you coming?" said Christy.

"There's something weird about this house," said Daniel.

"I wonder what," Christy said, giving her eyes a theatrical roll toward the family room and Mr. Hogue. As he passed through the kitchen, Daniel looked around, trying to see if anything portable was missing—a paradoxical exercise, given that he had never laid eyes on the room before. Sugar bowl, salt shaker, pepper mill, tea tongs trailing a winding rusty ribbon of dried tea. On the kitchen counter, under the telephone, lay a neat pile of letters and envelopes, and Daniel thought Hogue might have grabbed some of these, but they had been rubber-banded together and they looked undisturbed. A business card was affixed with a paper clip to the uppermost letter, printed with the name and telephone number of a Sergeant Matt Reedy of the Domestic Violence Unit of the Seattle Police Department. Daniel peeled

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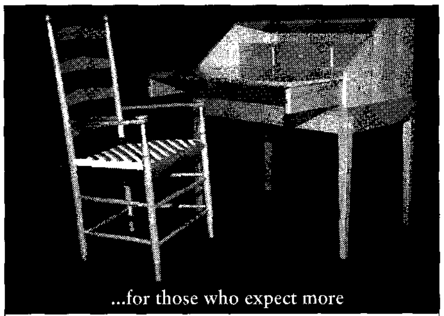
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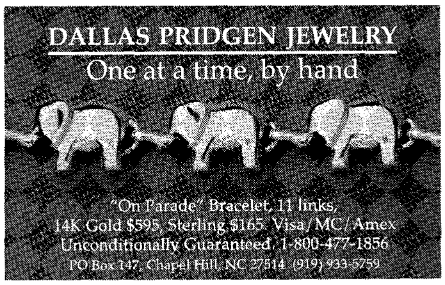
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back the pleat of the letter it was clipped to—it was out of its envelope—and peeked at its salutation, typed on an old typewriter that dropped its "O"s.

"DEAR BITCH," he read. "ARE YOU AND HERMAN HAPPY NOW, YOU— "

"Daniel! What are you doing?"

"Nothing," Daniel said, letting the letter fall shut again. "They, uh, they seem to be having some problems, the people who live in this house."

"Nothing that's our business, Daniel," Christy said, with what seemed to him excessive primness, taking hold of his hand.

Daniel yanked his hand free. He could hear Mr. Hogue muttering to himself in the other room.

"Ouch!" said Christy, bringing her fingers to her lips to kiss the joints he'd wrenched. She eyed the pile of letters on the counter. "What did it say?"

"It said maybe they ought to try rubbing each other's feet a little more often."

Now Christy really looked hurt.

"If you didn't want to do it, Daniel, I wish—"

"What's going on in here?" said Mr. Hogue, returning from the family room.

"We're just coming now," Daniel said. "Sorry. It's just—man, this kitchen is incredible."

Hogue gave a sour nod, lips pressed together. There was an obvious bulge in his right hip pocket now, and what appeared to be a table-tennis paddle protruding from the left one.

"Incredible," he agreed.

In the family room, when they joined him there, Hogue stole a well-thumbed paperback copy of Donald Trump's autobiography which was lying out on the coffee table, and in the small, tobacco-stained den off the foyer he took a little brass paperweight in the shape of a reclining pasha with curled slippers. When they went out to the garage, where, along with a long, slender automobile hidden under a canvas cover, there was a well-stocked workbench, he filched a box of nails, a Lufkin tape measure, and something else that Daniel couldn't quite determine the nature of. The thefts were blatant and apparently unself-conscious, and by the time they got upstairs to the second guest bedroom, Christy, too, was watching in a kind of jolly dread as Mr. Hogue worked the place over. He took a souvenir Space Needle, and a rubber coin purse, and a package of deodorizing shoe inserts. When he led the young couple at

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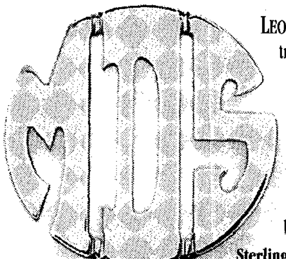

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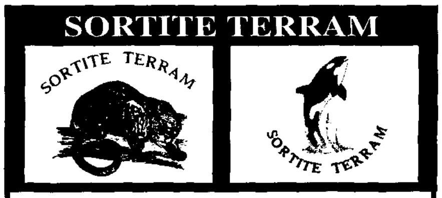

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last into the master bedroom, his pockets were jangling.

He stopped short as he entered the room, so that Daniel and Christy nearly collided with him. He looked around at the big four-poster bed, the heavy Eastlake dresser and wardrobe, the walls covered in an unusual dark paper the red of old leather books. Once again Hogue marvelled, in the same open-mouthed, oddly crestfallen manner, as if the bedroom's décor, like the living room's, came to him, somehow, as a blow. As in the living room, there was no indication that the sellers had been expecting anyone to come through. The bed was unmade, and there were some ruffled white blouses and several bras and pairs of women's underpants heaped on the floor by the door. Hogue crossed the dark-red room to a door opposite, which appeared to give onto a screened-in sleeping porch. Windows on either side of the door let in some of the bright September light pouring through the outer windows of the porch.

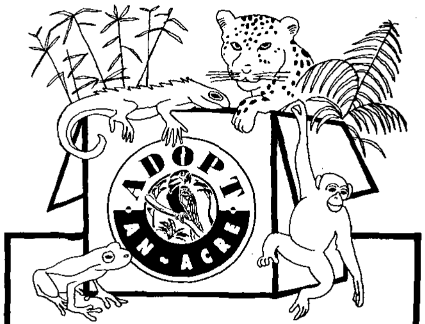
"I'd sure like to lie down in that hammock out there," Hogue said, with surprising wistfulness. He gave the knob an experimental twist. It was locked. He pressed his face to the glass. "God, I'm tired."

He reached into his breast pocket for a cigarette and found nothing there. He looked back and smiled thinly at Daniel and Christy, as if they had played a cruel trick on him, hiding the only solace of a weary and overworked man. Then he patted down all his clattering pockets until he came up with a tattered Pall Mall. He went over to a marble-topped nightstand beside the bed and pulled open its drawer. He scrabbled around inside until he found a book of matches. His hands were shaking so badly now that he dropped the cigarette. Then he dropped the burning match. At last he succeeded in getting the thing lit. He blew a plume of smoke toward the pillows of the big, disorderly bed.

"You'll get the sun almost all day long in this room," he said, dreamily. "It's a shame to paper it over so dark." Then he flicked ashes onto the polished fir floor.

"All right, Mr. Hogue," said Christy, with all the sharpness of tone she was capable of mustering. "I guess we've seen enough."

"All right," said Hogue, though he didn't move. He just stood there, looking



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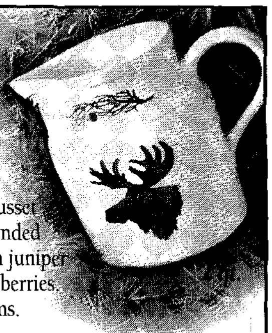

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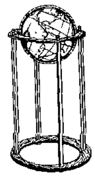

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out at the canvas hammock that was hung between two pillars of the sleeping porch.

"We'll meet you downstairs, how about?" Daniel said. "How about you just give us a minute to talk things over between ourselves. You know. Look around one more time. You can't rush into something like this, right?"

Hogue swallowed, and some of the old flush of anger seemed to return now to the tips of his ears and to the skin at the back of his neck. Daniel could see that it was Hogue who wanted to be left alone here, in this bedroom, contemplating all his untold mistakes and whatever it was that was eating at him. He wanted them out of there. Christy sidled up to Daniel and pressed herself against him, hip to his thigh, cheek against his shoulder. He put his arm around her, and pressed his fingers against the slight bulge of skin under the strap of her bra.

"You know how important the bedroom is," Christy said, in a strangled voice.

Hogue took a thoughtful drag on his cigarette, eying them. Then, as before, the fire seemed to go out of him, and he nodded.

"I'll meet you downstairs," he said. "You kids take all the time you want."

He went out of the room, but before he did so, he stopped by the pile of laundry, picked up a rather large pair of lobelia-blue panties with a lace waistband, and stuffed them into his pocket with the rest of his loot. They heard his tread on the stairs, and then, a moment later, the sound of a cabinet door squealing open on its hinges.

"He's going for the silver," Daniel said.

"Daniel, what are we going to do?"

Daniel shrugged. He sat down on the unmade bed, beside the nightstand that Hogue had rifled for matches.

"Maybe I should call my parents," Christy said. "They know Bob. Maybe they know what to do when he gets this way."

"I think it's a little too late for us to snub him," said Daniel.

Christy looked at him, angry and puzzled by the persistence of his nastiness toward her.

"That's not fair," she said. "God! Just because my parents—"

"Check this out." Daniel had been rummaging around in the nightstand

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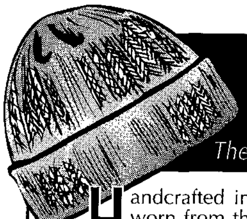

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drawer, where he had found, in addition to a bag of Ricola cough drops, a silver police whistle, and a small plastic vial of a popular genital lubricant, a greeting card, in a pink envelope that was laconically addressed "Monkey." He pulled out the card, on the cover of which Greta Garbo and John Gilbert were locked in a passionate black-and-white embrace. The greeting was handwritten: "I have tripped and fallen in love with you. Herman." After a moment Daniel looked up, feeling a little confused, and handed it to Christy. She took it with a disapproving frown.

"Herman," she read. "Herman Silk?"

"I guess it's a little extra service he provides."

"He must be selling his own house." She sat down on the bed beside him. "Do they do that?"

"Why not?" Daniel said. "Plenty of people sell their own houses."

"True."

He showed her the vial of lubricant.

"Maybe he should have said, 'I have slipped and fallen.' "

"Daniel, put that back. I mean it." She gestured downstairs. "Just because he's doing it doesn't mean you should." She snatched the little plastic bottle out of his hand, tossed it and the greeting card into the drawer, and then slammed the drawer shut. "Come on. Let's just get out of here."

They glared at each other, and then Daniel stood up. He felt a strong desire for his wife. He wanted to push her down onto the bed and pound her until his bones hurt and the smell of smoke from her hair filled the bedroom. But he would never do anything like that. And neither would she. Not in someone else's house, in someone else's bed. They were, both of them, hypochondriacs and low rollers, habitual occupants of the right lane on freeways, inveterate savers of receipts, subscribers to *Consumer Reports*, filterers of tap water, wearers of helmets and goggles and kneepads. And yet their prudence—prudence itself, it now seemed to Daniel, watching Christy's freckled breast fall and rise and fall—was an illusion, a thin padded blanket they drew around themselves to cushion the impact from the string of bad decisions each of them had made. For all their apparent caution, they had nonetheless married each other, willingly and without material compulsion, in the presence of the three hundred people. Christy had agreed to join herself in perpetuity to a man whose touch left her vagina as dry as a fist, and Daniel had consigned himself to a life spent as a hundred and sixty-two pounds of hair in her mouth and elbows in her rib cage and hot breath in her nostrils.

"I hate you," he said.

For a moment she looked very surprised by this admission. Then she stuck out her jaw and narrowed her eyes.

"Well, I hate you, too," she said.

Daniel fell on top of her. He was a little self-conscious at first about the animal sounds he heard them making and the way they were biting and tearing at each other's clothes. It was uncomfortably reminiscent of a key scene in "Spanking Brittany Blue." Then some spasm sent Christy's hand flying, and she smacked Daniel in the eye. Inside his skull a bright red star flared and then winked out. After that, he forgot to pay attention to what they were doing. The bed underneath them smelled of its right occupants, of the night sweat and the aftershave and the skin lotion of Herman Silk and his Monkey. A loose board in the old fir floor rhythmically creaked. When the proper time came, Daniel reached into the drawer for Herman's little bottle of lubricant. He turned Christy over on her belly, and spread her legs with his knee, and greased her freely with the cold, clear stuff. His entry into her was, for the first time, effortless and quick.

"That was fun," Christy said, when it was over. She stretched her limbs across the wrecked bed as if to embrace it, and rolled, like a cat, back and forth, until it was smeared with the manifold compound of their lovemaking.

"Still hate me?" said Daniel.

She nodded, and that was when Daniel saw the mistake that they had made. Although sex was something they both regarded as perilous, marriage had, by contrast, seemed safe—a safe house in a world of danger; the ultimate haven of two solitary, fearful souls. When you were single, this was what everyone who was already married was always telling you. Daniel himself had said it to his unmarried friends. It was, however, a lie. Sex had everything to do with violence, that was true, and marriage was at once a

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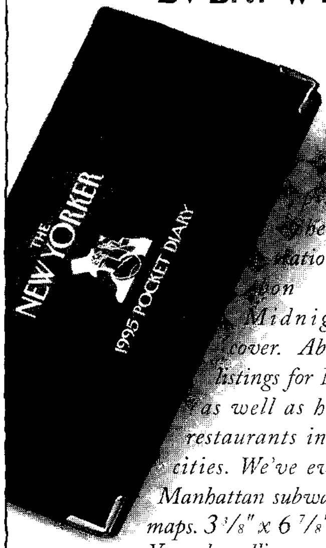

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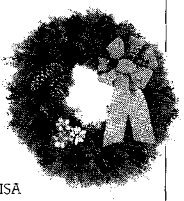

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"I had lunch with your father the other day," he began.

"Shh!" Christy said.

He lay beside her, listening. From downstairs they could hear the sound of raised voices. A man and a woman were shouting at each other. The man was Mr. Hogue.

"I'm going to call the police, Bob," the woman said.

Daniel and Christy looked at each other. They stood up and scrambled to reassemble their clothes. Daniel slipped the vial of lubricant into his pocket. Then they went downstairs.

When they came into the kitchen, Mr. Hogue was lying on the floor, amid hundreds and hundreds of spilt three-penny nails, cupping his chin in his hands. Blood leaked out between his fingers and drizzled down his neck into the plaid of his madras jacket. The reclining brass pasha, the Ping-Pong paddle, Space Needle, and all the other things he had stolen lay scattered on the floor around him. A handsome woman with red spectacles, whom Daniel recognized as Mrs. Hogue, was kneeling beside him, tears on her face, wiping at the cut on his chin with a paper towel.

"Christy," she said. "Hello, Daniel."

She smiled ruefully and looked down at Mr. Hogue, moaning and whispering curses on the terra-cotta floor.

"Is he O.K.?" Daniel said, pointing to the realtor, who was, he saw now, no stranger to these troubled rooms.

"I certainly hope not. I hit him as hard as I could." Mrs. Hogue dabbed tenderly at the cut with the paper towel, then looked around at the kitchen she had renovated at such great expense. "So," she said, "what do you two think of the house?"

Daniel looked at Christy. She had lost her scarf sometime in the course of their struggle upstairs. Her face was a blur of smeared lipstick and streaked mascara and the radiant blood in her cheeks.

"It's perfect," he said. ♦

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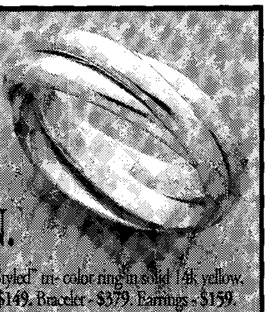

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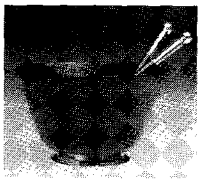

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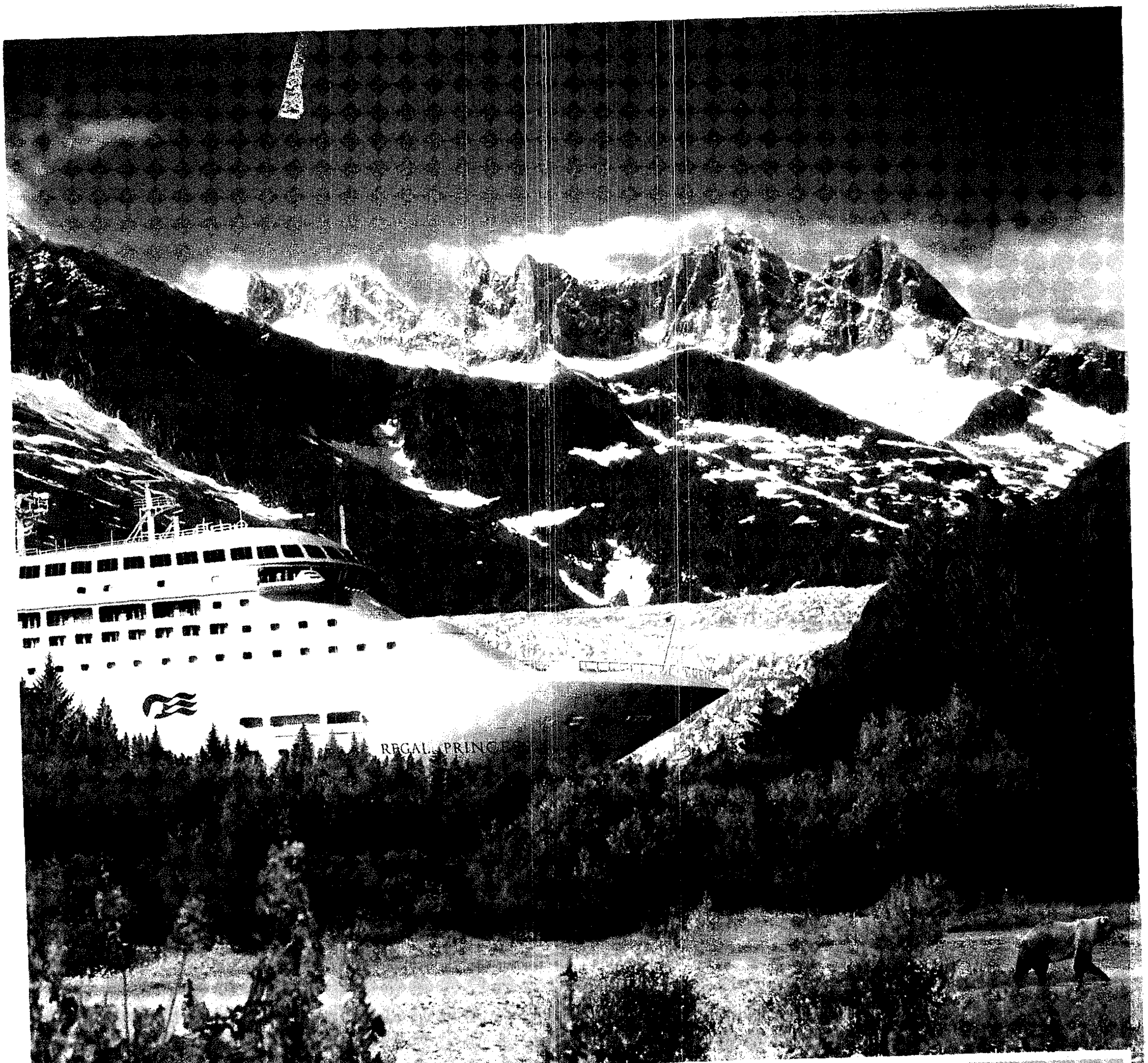

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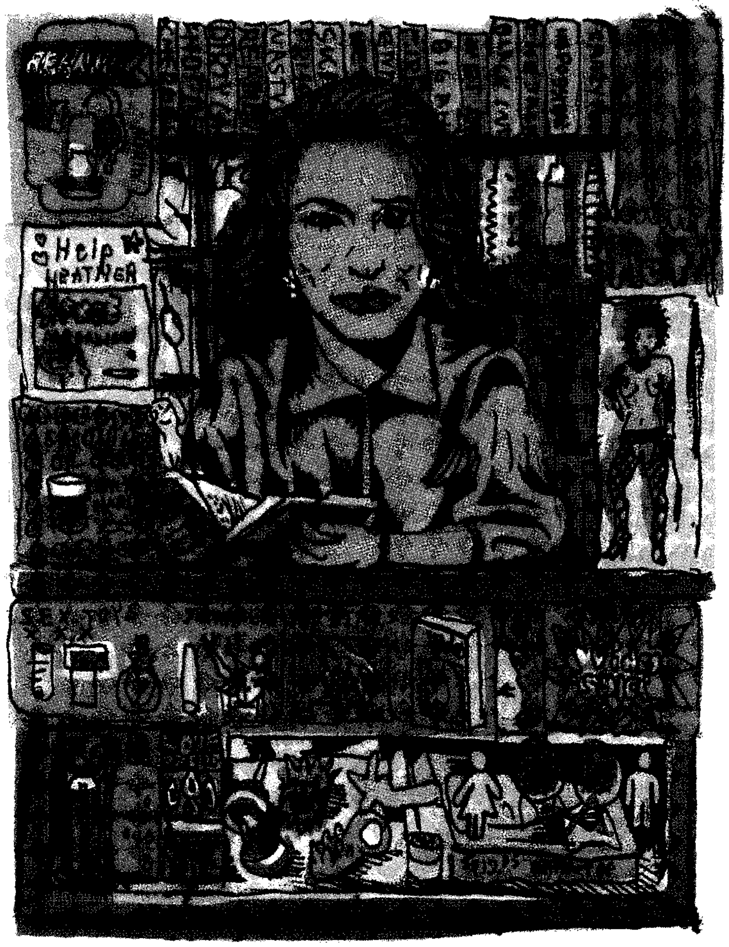
THE CRITICS

BOOKS

POSITION PAPERS

BY JAMES WOLCOTT

SALLIE TISDALE'S "Talk Dirty to Me" (Doubleday; $22.95) is a high-toned tease—a lap dance for the literati. From its breathy title to its black slipcase (which is intended to look like a box for a porn video), the book is a heavy-duty come-on. It is subtitled "An Intimate Philosophy of Sex," and has been avidly awaited ever since Tisdale's 1992 *Harper's* essay describing her enthusiasm for pornography—an essay that ran counter to the stern teachings of Catharine MacKinnon and Andrea Dworkin, for whom porn is phallocentrism making a practice run, a rehearsal for rape. Tisdale, who is divorced, the mother of three, a former nurse, and a Zen Buddhist, did not fit the profile of a professional libertine; she was no Erica Jong plumping her lips and making porn sound like a yummy treat. And, unlike Camille Paglia, another porn advocate, she didn't browbeat the reader by conducting the debate over porn at a jet-liftoff noise level; she shunned hyperbole. Tisdale's essay domesticated the appeal of pornography, acknowledging its funguslike fix on the imagination, and left room for intellectual doubt and emotional muddle. She positioned herself as a stand-in for anybody who had ever popped an X-rated tape into the VCR and got turned on against her better judgment. Here was a sensible, horny woman with whom readers could identify.



Sallie Tisdale, author of "Talk Dirty to Me": A sensible, horny woman with whom readers could identify.

Now Tisdale's essay has been expanded to book length and broadened to cover the entire bandwidth of her sexual response. This kind of palpable personal truth was absent from the survey material that Tisdale studied. In her opening chapter she writes, "Over the years I've read a lot of the research and I've read theory and I've read plenty of mannerly and overblown literary prose on the subject, but what I really longed for all along was material that addressed the real experience of sex." By "real experience" she means that which is intimate and unique to the individual. Hence "this book, even when it's about other people's fantasies and other people's myths, is largely about me."

It's a "me" that keeps swimming around:

> When I talk about sex, and most particularly when I talk about myself, I am struggling to be as honest as I can be. But I'm haunted by the fact that nothing I can say will be complete. I find myself saying different things to different people, at different times, and often what I say sounds forced, inadequate, insincere. Sex is a game, a weapon, a toy, a joy, a trance, an enlightenment, a loss, a hope. I contradict myself, because nothing I say can ever be enough. It's all true, though—just about everything is true, especially the contradictions.

Tisdale's Whitmanesque embrace of her own contradictions is as big as all outdoors, and so is her definition of sex itself. "When I talk about sex," she explains, "I'm talking about nothing more than the sensation of being alive—the myriad scattered and quotidian aspects of life." And, because life is flux, sex can't be reduced to binary opposites: straight/gay; monogamous/promiscuous; healthy/sick. Fantasies are fluid, "gender is *all* illusion," and sexual preference is an endless swirl:

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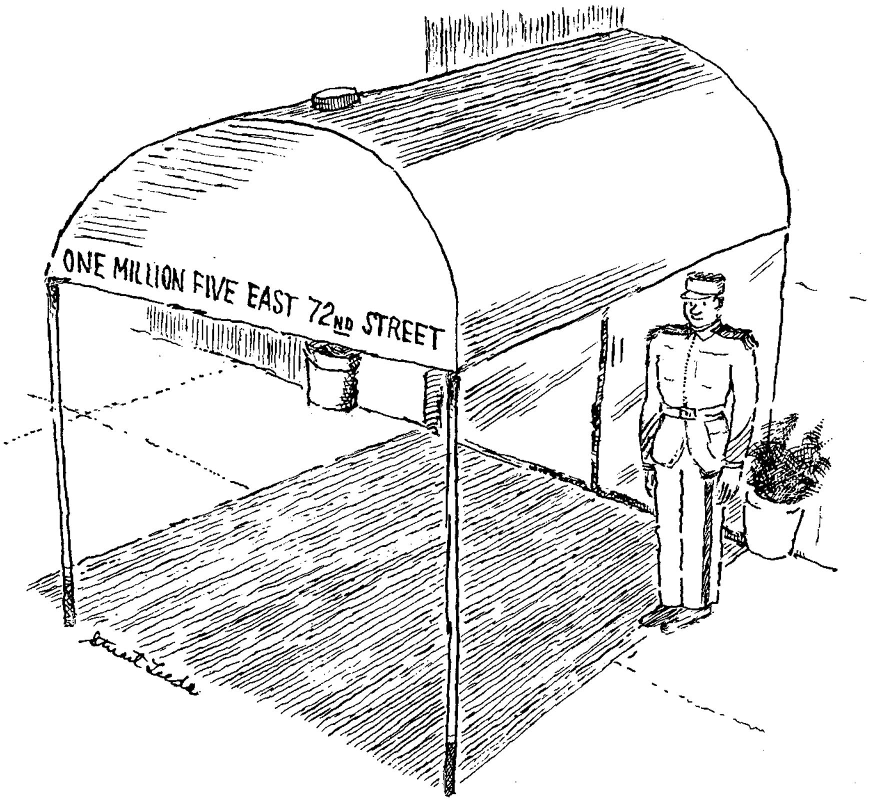
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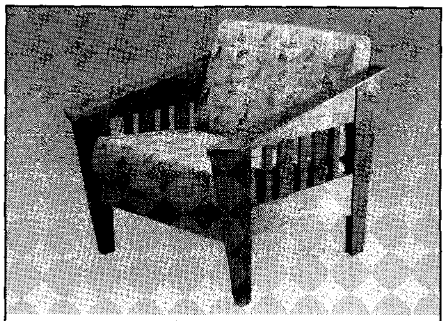
men. He may be telling me he is attracted specifically to me. . . . He's not attracted to all women, is he? He's not even attracted to all of the women who fit a particular age or body type. He means, I think, that what we might call his "primary erotic object" will be a woman, but beyond that—what?

As she blurs distinctions, poses riddles, and refracts everything through her multifaceted mind, making herself dizzy with questions and more questions ("Which works, which is worked upon? Which is the tool, which tooled?"), Tisdale verges on shedding her Everywoman persona and assuming the robes of an erotic oracle, a nineties Anaïs Nin. Yet her book is not an act of narcissism. Its purpose is more programmatic. Despite its bad-girl pose ("Degrade me, baby," she says at the end of one chapter) and perfume spritzes of Fine Prose ("Ghosts inhabit my orgasm; long-gone spirits speak"), "Talk Dirty to Me" isn't a personal treatise but a polemical tract—a piece of countercultural sexual-liberation theology. For all her talk about the sheer sensation of being alive, Tisdale isn't interested in the intermediate dance steps of courtship—in flirtation, seduction, visits to the lingerie department, or any of the other fine points of human byplay that help make sex sexy. She spends paragraphs on the rampant humpings of bonobo chimps, but has near nothing to say about her own sexual partners or preferences. It's as if she feared that any mention of technique in bed or of the head games that are played afterward would leave us in the realm of petty transactions. She's a sexual transcendentalist. For Tisdale, sex is a vale of soul-making and a vehicle for self-transformation. She wishes to reclaim the radical power of sex—to revive the Reichian dream of the orgasm as the springboard of social upheaval. Merely to get naked is to join the struggle: "Taking off clothes is revolutionary, proletarian; stripping reduces and removes whatever status we rely on."

Once stripped of status, we are free to renew ourselves. But trying to control the reins of the runaway stagecoach of libido are the paternal orders of church, state, and psychiatry: "Freud predicted terrible things from the free release of the instincts, and so does Jesse Helms." Tisdale's hero is Herbert Marcuse, a Freudian-Marxist synthesist who was a cult figure in the sixties and early seventies. In his book "Eros and Civilization" Marcuse championed erotic reality, which he defined as a return to "the anarchic and total sexuality of early infancy"—not to be confused with lying naked on a blan-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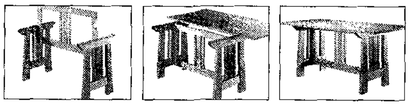
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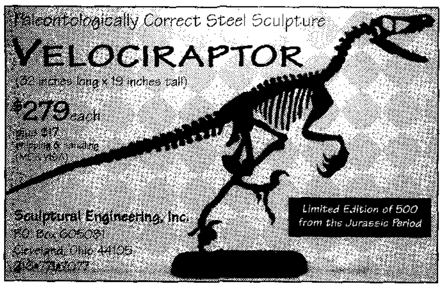
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ket and playing with our toes. "What Marcuse calls 'erotic reality' isn't based in sex so much as in a life-affirming and loving acceptance of others," Tisdale explains.

Acceptance means suspending our qualms and not imposing our value judgments on others' behavior. No need to be narrow-minded; there is room in the hot tub for everyone. After watching a German porn film called "Discipline in Leather" and finding it an absurd exercise, Tisdale chides herself: "Every time I catch myself in that state of mind, that state of 'I don't get it,' 'I don't understand,' I have to grab hold and remember how it feels to be censored in my turn, to have anyone turn to me, and say, 'You can't do that, because I don't understand.' " What happens when your reaction is not "I don't understand" but "This is making me sick"? Do you ignore your queasiness? Tisdale's coping device is to keep her eye on the big picture. For example, to those who say sex clubs are insults against the spirit which overcharge for watered-down drinks, Tisdale has a lecture prepared: "When people complain about how 'exploitive' or 'degrading' something like a sex club is . . . they fail to acknowledge how terrible and exploitative marriage, monogamy, and the nuclear family can be for millions of people . . . how downright dangerous heterosexual, patriarchal culture is for all women." Indeed, Tisdale argues, sex clubs are the fission chambers of the next sexual revolution. Along with "anarchic sex shows" and "underground magazines," they are collecting and releasing energy that will fireball through society. The dead weight at the top won't be able to cork this group orgasm from below.

To express her solidarity with the sexual underclass, Tisdale devotes part of a chapter to prostitution. "There is a whore in each of us," she claims. Her interviews with the sex workers sound like success stories from an infomercial. Let's say hello to Jackie, "an attractively tousled, almost maternally curvaceous woman in her late thirties," who wants to show people her spacious apartment and say: "Look at what my pussy got me!" Then there's Alex, "a beautiful woman with pale skin, dark hair, a slender athletic body, and a serene manner." She bankrolled her bachelor's degree in community studies through prostitution. While the anti-porn stereotype of the

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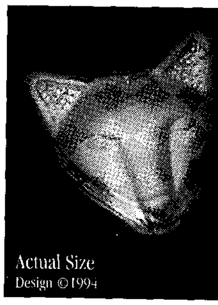
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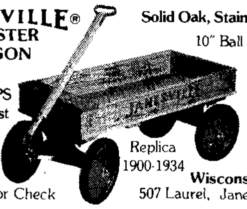
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prostitute is a woman reduced to the lowest form of sex object—a receptacle—the pro-porn stereotype of the prostitute as an "empowered" entrepreneur doesn't seem much more useful. I used to live on a street where a lot of hookers worked, and they were a tottering, bruised, crack-burned bunch; dead but still standing. In the morning, nervously joking mothers would shepherd lines of children past them to the nearby music school. Tisdale dismisses such attempts to shelter: "This American urge to protect the young is one with the urge to protect Woman, which has as much to do with real women as it does with tuna casserole."

Tisdale also spends a day hanging around a sex emporium near San Francisco's Mission District, where an employee tells her, "One thing I've noticed is that I don't laugh at dirty jokes anymore. So much of the laugh in dirty jokes is just the fact that someone's talking about sex. People go into giggles when they hear that we sell butt plugs. I don't have any patience with it anymore." After all, purchasing a butt plug is a very personal decision. *Would you like me to wrap it, sir, or will you be wearing it home?* Of course, certain jokes are permissible, even in the People's Republic of Progressive Orgasm. Tisdale says, "A friend tells me a joke: 'What's that ugly piece of flesh at the end of the penis called?' 'A man.' I tell the joke to every man I know, and, funny enough, none of them laugh half so hard as I do." Well, Sallie, it's all in the delivery.

THERE has always been an awful sexual arrogance to the left, an air of superiority to which even an earth-mother, tree-hugging trainee Buddha like Tisdale is not immune. Because the left preaches sensual gratification as part of its political mandate to rewire the body electric (a visionary tradition spanning writers from William Blake to Norman O. Brown), it assumes that its denizens are bouncier in the flesh than those uptight prudes and squares who go to church on Sunday and clip items from *Reader's Digest*. In "Talk Dirty to Me" Tisdale quotes the writer Dennis Altman's comment that "casual sex can be a good way of getting to know people." She elaborates: "When we strip away the veneer of religion, from which stems most, if not all, of our prohibitions about casual sex, when you see sex as *just sex*, it makes perfect sense."

It does? Suppose true sexual satisfaction—true, deepening knowledge and self-knowledge—comes not from a heavy turnover in warm bodies or attending paddle night at the local leather bar but from focus, devotion, and a regular, rocking motion? The authors of the just published study "Sex in America" (Little, Brown) note that, more than any other group, conservative Protestant women reported always having an orgasm during sex. They comment, "The association for women between religious affiliation and orgasms may seem surprising because conservative religious women are so often portrayed as sexually repressed. Perhaps conservative Protestant women firmly believe in the holiness of marriage and of sexuality as an expression of their love for their husbands."

Sexual liberationists like Tisdale believe that the route to self-realization is a zigzag one. You have to be willing to walk on the wild side. Her book is dedicated "To the nasty girls who are leading the way: Susie Sexpert, Carol Queen, Mistress Marlayna, Laura the Girl Sloth, Lily Braindrop, Lisa LaBia, and the rest." They sound like a colorful group of extroverts, embodying Tisdale's ideal of each person becoming her own open book. In the concluding pages of "Talk Dirty to Me" she writes, "A lot of dirt has been flung about to make the case that people should not be proud, should not show off, brag about, exhibit, demonstrate, or share their sexual selves except in a few restricted ways. . . . What if the fury about sex became a celebration, a joy, a shout?" The catch is that there remains an odd etiquette, a circumspection about sex, that no amount of cheerleading can dispel. As Wilfrid Sheed has observed, the "dirty little secret of sex has been unveiled for some time, yet we still frown on people who boast about their sexual prowess as much as we frown on people who boast about their money." After all, isn't it enough you scored the touchdown? Do we need to see the end-zone dance, too?

The anticipation that preceded the arrival of "Talk Dirty to Me"—which was also excerpted in *Vogue*, *Esquire*, and *Elle*—suggests that a lot of educated readers want to be bad, want to be cool, want to shave off twenty years and twenty pounds and get back on the trampoline. They feel they're missing out. One reason the staid findings of the "Sex in America" survey were greeted with such relief was that people realized they weren't the only ones not getting any. The non-stop frenzy of pop culture makes nearly everyone feel inadequate. Sex is plastered all over the media in a frantic simulation of hard-bodied action, like the codpiece swagger of rock videos. But hot, happening sex—Sharon Stone and Sylvester Stallone in the shower in "The Specialist"—overcompensates for its lack of passion by reducing its stars to sheer muscle. The effect is stagey, farcical. It's like watching two punching bags have sex. Violence is the real sex now. In "Natural Born Killers," "Pulp Fiction," and "The Professional," the audience gets off by watching people get offed.

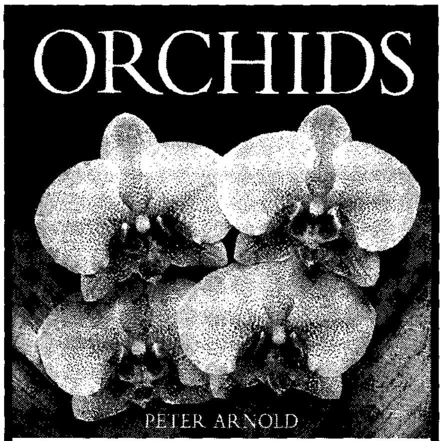
Compared to this red harvest, porn doesn't seem so inhuman. At least it spares us the pretentious alienation of serial-killer chic. Ironically, although "Talk Dirty to Me" takes its title from a seventies porn flick, and Tisdale has been dubbed "Pornography's Passionate Advocate" by *Newsweek*, the book's coverage of porn is thin and generalized. Tisdale seems unaware that porn is a phenomenal subcult, a mock-Hollywood with its own stars, auteurs, awards, and tragedies (like Savannah's recent suicide). It's a significant line in pop culture from Betty Page to Traci Lords. Tisdale defends porn, but in a caring, humanistic manner that's rounded off at the corners. I don't think Tisdale, for all her testifying, truly wants to be a red-hot mama. I think what she really wants is a hug. ♦

DANCING

JUKEBOX SATURDAY NIGHT

BY ARLENE CROCE

THE twentieth century, the century of dance, began with Isadora Duncan striving to rehabilitate a scorned art by showing that it could be done to great music—Gluck, Chopin, Brahms. And the century is ending with Isadora's heirs taking their status for granted; they're even kicking it around. The idea that dance needs great music, or needs its own music, has been effectively questioned by modern-day choreographers, but few have been willing to cross the line that separates respectable art-dance music from the vernacular. This fall, four companies appearing in Manhattan crossed the line and drew a new one. In these shifting sands, it's hard to tell what distinguishes permissible from unpermissible pop. Basically, I think, it's a dateline. To judge by the recorded repertory that accompanied the dances, the crucial divider is 1970—nothing later than Woodstock. Before Woodstock, anything goes. The repertory was a mishmash, ranging from the classics of Hoagy Carmichael and Cole Porter through "Unchained Melody" and "Heartbreak Hotel" to really inexcusable stuff like "Does Your Chewing Gum Lose Its Flavor (on the Bedpost Overnight)?" This last number crowned a Paul Taylor première, a zonked-out



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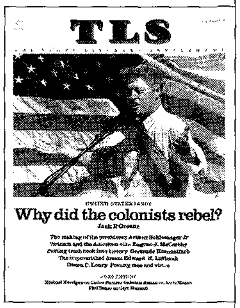
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suite of dances to old novelty phonograph records, called "Funny Papers." Taylor's season (at City Center) also included a new work to music of Debussy—new in the sense that it is a fresh spinning out of a story that Taylor has told before about the children of the company being put through a ritual of initiation by two parentlike elders. This version, which Taylor calls "Moonbine," had mystery, and it had musical integrity. Debussy's score, the Sonata for Flute, Viola, and Harp, was played live. Isadora would have been pleased. But "Funny Papers" was Paul Taylor's night out.

In 1991, Taylor made a piece called "Company B," to the biggest hits of the Andrews Sisters. It was his long-delayed plunge into a genre launched two decades before by Twyla Tharp, in "Deuce Coupe." In "Funny Papers" Taylor plunges all the way to the nethermost depths of pop. He takes note of the Tharp precedent with his very first selection, "Alley Oop," sung by a group called the Hollywood Argyles. Tharp's "Alley Oop," like all the songs in "Deuce Coupe," was sung by the Beach Boys. This wasn't the jazz she had made her name on; it wasn't the blues or even the rhythm and blues she'd also handled well. It was unadulterated pop. And it was pop inseparable from performance. Tharp wanted not just the Beach Boys' songs but the Beach Boys' sound. When, in 1970, Balanchine chose the Gershwin songbook for his "Who Cares?" (a ballet that may well have inspired Tharp), he used only one Gershwin performance—the piano-roll recording of "Clap Yo' Hands." The rest of the songs he turned over to the orchestrator Hershy Kay. "Deuce Coupe" was danced entirely to popular music on records; it was the first jukebox ballet.

Tharp's use of the Beach Boys proclaimed, among other things, that they were musicians, and Taylor's setting of the Andrews Sisters paid them the same kind of homage. But pop music is a mixed affair. "Deuce Coupe" and "Company B" were not so much about their music as about what it evoked—teenagers in the sixties in the case of "Deuce Coupe," and the Second World War in the case of "Company B." Because of its disposability, pop music is memories: it haunts and teases and infuriates us; it stabs us the way old snapshots do when

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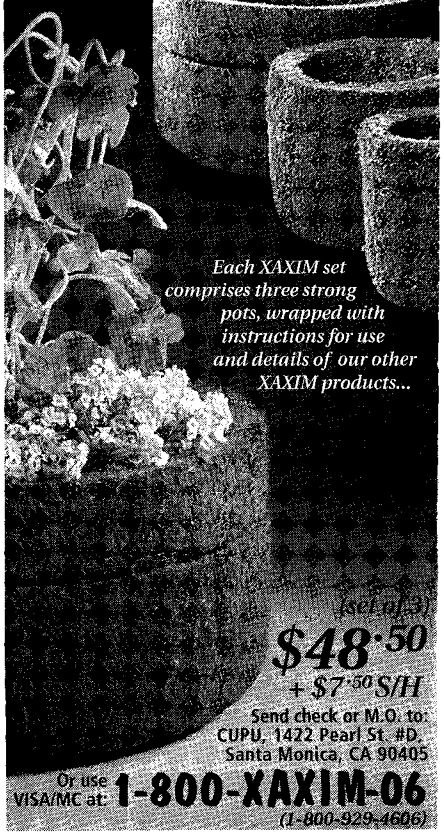
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we come upon them at the bottom of a pile of socks. The interesting thing about "Funny Papers" is that it has almost no nostalgia quotient. Who remembers the chewing-gum-on-the-bedpost song? Who *cares* to remember it, or "I Like Bananas Because They Have No Bones" or "The Okeh Laughing Record"? (Taylor must have one of those never-throw-anything-away attics.) Or take that grizzled perennial "I'm Popeye the Sailor Man." It's not exactly an irritant, only an old song everyone knows and no one could possibly have personal feelings about—and not just because it's a novelty song. "Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf" was a novelty song of the Depression that scares some people to this day. Slapstick isn't the whole of Taylor's point, either (or he would have called on Spike Jones, the maestro of mayhem). Pop without sentiment, numbskull pop, pop that is its own form of hallucination—this is the material of "Funny Papers."

Surprisingly, it all works as dance music. In the past when Taylor has indulged his silly streak, he has sometimes pushed the jokes at the expense of the movement. Here the jokes come either from sly juxtapositions of the movement and the soundtrack or straight from the physicality of the soundtrack. "Popeye" and "Alley Oop" are obvious "physical" choices, and so is "Itsy Bitsy Teenie Weenie Yellow Polkadot Bikini," a gentle, relaxing rumba that became a nationwide hit in 1960. I'd guess that, next to Martha Graham, the biggest influence on Taylor's style has been Disney and other mastermind movie cartoonists—the creators of Tom and Jerry, Bugs Bunny, and Daffy Duck. "Itsy Bitsy" is a miniature Silly Symphony. It's the best of the "Funny Papers" selections from a musical standpoint, and such is Taylor's musical gift that he can't help turning it into a delicious if somewhat redundant spectacle: he stages it with two dancers and only needs one.

And is Paul Taylor the last of the great choreographers with memories of vaudeville? According to publicity handouts, all the numbers in "Funny Papers" were constructed by him out of choreography devised by his dancers. This may explain the unusual sharpness of the dancing—Andrew Asnes' Popeye is a knockout—but neither Mr. Asnes nor any of the other dancers who are credited with the choreography (Sandra Stone, Mary Cochran, Hernando Cortez, David Grenke, and Patrick Corbin) appear to be over thirty, and the dexterity of "Funny Papers," to say nothing of its lunacy and its energizing violence, are qualities that the piece has because someone has remembered and understood the whole nutty-novelty escapist tradition in pop music and the kind of performance it occasioned. But don't mistake this historicity for a concern with the past. Probably the most uproarious number is done to Darlene Edwards' demented singing of "I Am Woman." Performed by a straight Denise Roberts and then by a straight-faced Mr. Cortez, it goes to the heart of gender studies and the androgynous chic of the nineties. The only thing better than watching this number in "Funny Papers" would have been watching Taylor and his cohort while they worked it up.

TAYLOR'S company is forty years old, and it still dances nothing but Taylor. Lar Lubovitch's company has been dancing Lubovitch for twenty-five years, but it is not, like Taylor's company, an intense expression of one man's vision. Lubovitch substitutes attitude for vision. This is fine when it's *your* attitude, and it usually is: Lubovitch loves shocking his liberal audience and appealing to its superior wisdom at the same time. In "So in Love" he puts a safety pin through the nostril of Cole Porter. Well, but wasn't Cole a subversive at heart? Wouldn't he have loved grunge? The soundtrack of "So in Love" draws on the remodelled versions of Porter's songs in the concept album "Red, Hot and Blue." Tom Waits's pummelling of "It's All Right with Me" doesn't sound hostile to my ears (it's too abjectly rebellious), but Lubovitch thrilled the audience at the Joyce by hurling up-yours gestures at it. His dancer, the striding, head-tossing, hair-flinging Rebecca Rigert, is everything Rush Limbaugh means by "feminazi." This solo turn is complemented by one other, also done by a woman: the title number, sung by an achy K. D. Lang. By the time Lang gets to "So taunt me and hurt me, deceive me, desert me," the subversive Porter has become a raving masochist. The dancer (Mia Babalis) crawls and thrashes and squirms like a

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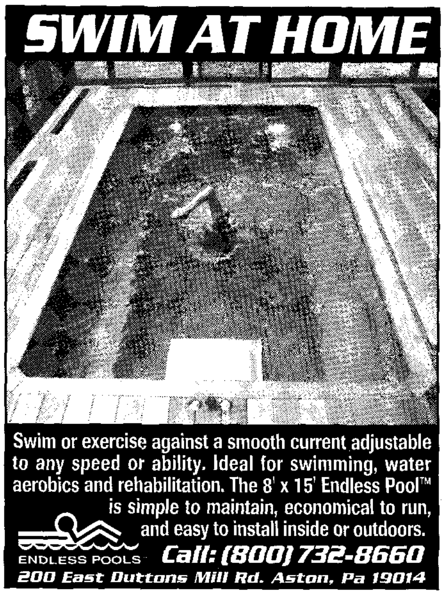
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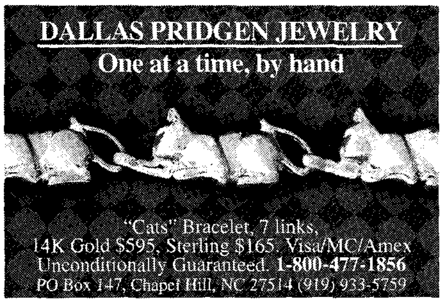
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cornered weasel. Jimmy Somerville's abusive treatment of "From This Moment On" elicits Lubovitch's one real success: a pugilistic pas de deux for a couple in kneepads. You for me, dear. Pow, zoom.

But how is it that Lubovitch is always spoken of as a musical choreographer? Even his musicality is attitudinistic: jolly decent Mozart, beatific Brahms. He interrupts his Mozart to give us a gay men's duet full of manly reticence. (This pious Victorian valentine, first performed in 1986, has become an AIDS-benefit standby.) In "So in Love" Lubovitch doesn't seem to hear the musicians trying to jar Porter loose from his dated dance-band dynamics. To the Neville Brothers' rhythmically jagged "In the Still of the Night" he stages a blandly conventional ballroom number, full of exhibition-style swooping and scooping. Annie Lennox's "Ev'ry Time We Say Goodbye" twists the song out of shape, and we get a couple miming—not dancing—a breakup. I take it as axiomatic that Lubovitch's response is to words rather than to music, just as his idea of "updated" Cole Porter is dysfunctional heterosexual relationships and damaged women.

Things are very different with Smuin Ballets / SF, a new company formed in San Francisco by Michael Smuin. Smuin prefers Nat Cole to Cole Porter, and he doesn't reconceptualize. His whole approach is based on marketable notions of versatility; he's your basic all-around professional dance man, and his show is more a revue than a concert of dance. But he's not a hack. There is passion as well as expertise in the romantic duets that constitute the evening's main draw: the settings of "These Foolish Things" and "Georgia on My Mind" and "For Sentimental Reasons." Nothing happens between the boy and the girl that you might not expect, except that it never happens the same way twice. Smuin can go on and on in this vein without tiring us—first, because he's musically sensitive and treats every song as an entity, and then because he doesn't clamp down on a point, telling us how to react. His expertise is strangely soft-core.

In between these duets come slabs of generic lard—fanged solos for cat women, hot numbers done with hats or chairs, a solemn "mauve" turn in toeshoes to "Ave Maria." In the second half of the show, genres run riot: the lesbian tango, the Pierrot pas de deux, the flamenco scene are topped off with the "balcony" duet from Prokofiev's "Romeo and Juliet." It all suggests a connoisseur of clichés rather than an artist of range. And Smuin's dancers haven't the style that might redeem the ballet numbers from kitsch or the Vegas numbers from Vegas. But the real problem is his inconsistency: he can be artful, he can be slick, but he can also be insecure and undemanding. He doesn't seal the logic of a set piece; he changes the subject, lest he bore us. He lacks the nerve that would let a Robbins or a Fosse ram an effect down our throats. The upside of this tendency is the openness of dances like "For Sentimental Reasons" and "When You Wish Upon a Star," in which we watch a dancer named Celia Fushille-Burke get hold of her stage persona and transform herself from a Cyd Charisse type into someone we've never met before. The emergence of a dancer is not a miracle; the choreographer helps. And Smuin helped the extraordinary Tiffany Heft bring off an amazing turnabout in two Carmichael songs, sung by Willie Nelson. A shapely blonde with a finely buffed edge, Heft danced alone to "Stardust"—not sentimentally but forwardly, even cynically. Then an encounter with Gregory Amato to "Georgia on My Mind" showed that the cynicism was a mask. You'd think Smuin would reverse the process, stressing the effrontery in the pas de deux and reserving the innocence for the private "revelation." But the duality in Heft met the duality in Smuin and set off this unguarded moment of truthfulness. Such a moment, which pulls us way inside the music and the wonder of theatre, ought to have been left to stand by itself as the jewel it is, but Smuin spoils it by immediately bringing the two dancers back for an irrelevant encore to "On the Sunny Side of the Street." Smuin is inconsistent in his very inconsistency. Or maybe he thought he was nailing it this time.

Smuin's group played the Joyce back to back with Hubbard Street Dance Chicago. Both were making New York débuts, and it was Hubbard that got the good reviews in the New York dailies. This is a large, handsome, well-established company with a solid reputation. It dances a mixed repertory, with special

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emphasis on Twyla Tharp revivals. Hubbard has class. I enjoyed the performances I saw; I would go again, but not to re-see anything. Hubbard performances are perfection the first time. The repeats of "Sue's Leg" and "Baker's Dozen" that I happened to see were just repeats: the dancing didn't breathe, didn't have that magical Tharp feeling of being almost out of control, and didn't force me to see more. As revivals go these days, Hubbard Tharp deserves an A, but in Dance Heaven, where it seems to me Tharp's premières took place—"Sue's Leg" in 1975 and "Baker's Dozen" in 1979—it gets a C-plus. Well, maybe "Baker's Dozen" gets a B. Set to the lacily elegant piano of Willie (The Lion) Smith, it was never one of Tharp's go-for-broke pieces; its lateral planning worked to superb effect on the wide stage of the Joyce, and, with a cast of twelve people forever coming and going and mixing it up, you couldn't fail to see new things every time. The burden of performance falls on nobody in particular. In "Sue's Leg" there are only four dancers, each exposed to the maximum by the highly individualized choreography that Tharp devised for herself, Rose Marie Wright, Kenneth Rinker, and Tom Rawe, to Fats Waller records. Hubbard's Krista Swenson, through some feat of self-possession, managed to suggest the impact of Twyla and create her own performance at the same time. Swenson and Tharp are physically not dissimilar, but the robust, red-headed Swenson is sweeter and more overtly engaging. Her coup in "Sue's Leg" reminded me of the way Barbara Cook sings "I Must Have That Man," as if paying homage to Billie Holiday.

"Nine Sinatra Songs" has been put through so many permutations by Tharp herself—there was the Broadway version, the American Ballet Theatre version, the Baryshnikov version ("Sinatra Suite")—that to fault Hubbard for inaccuracies would be pointless. Sinatra gave Tharp her climactic jukebox/car-radio ballet. By the time she made it, in 1982, there were already four such pieces in the repertory of the newly formed Mark Morris company. American popular music had changed, and so had the conditions of American concert dance. It was now economically impossible for most choreographers to hire an orchestra or pay a composer roy-

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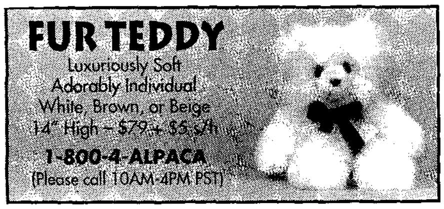

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alties. Tharp's pioneering of pop was her reason to use records, and she also used music composed directly for tape. Hubbard performs "The Golden Section," the big number from a full-evening piece choreographed in 1981 to a score by David Byrne. This onrushing, ever-evolving ballet was the end point in daredevil Tharp technique, pitting extreme peril against extreme capacity. Hubbard comes through the ordeal intact, all the stunts in place, no challenge shirked. But would you want to see "The Best Strategies of Joe Montana Replayed"? Would you believe that nobody knew where the ball was?

Hubbard looks to me like a well-brought-up ballet company, willing to muddy its skirts if only it knew how. The Tharp pieces are kept in shape by certified Tharp coaches, but the fact is that the Hubbard simply does not dance as if it loved risking its neck or its center of gravity. It was founded in 1977 by a former Broadway dancer, Lou Conte, who had become a choreographer of musicals. Conte is still its artistic director, and he included two song-hit dances in the Joyce season—his own "Georgia on My Mind" (to the same Willie Nelson version used by Smuin) and Richard Levi's "Love Letters," as sung by Kitty Wells. Both numbers concerned bereft women and the men whom the women are thinking about. Both were skillfully put together and persuasively danced, and both carried a little too much emotional freight. The Hubbard dancers didn't make the mistake of substituting acting for dancing, but they were dancing programmed emotion. In the Tharp pieces, they seemed able to convey the emotional implications of a gesture without surrendering to it. But the chewing gum had lost its flavor. To young dancers today, Tharp's popular ballets are virtually synonymous with the popular arts they were extracted—and abstracted—from, whereas the dancers of Tharp's day were so pure that they could be accused of affectlessness. Even Lar Lubovitch, who started his company in the year of Woodstock, was part of the general trend toward uninterpreted dance meaning. But the changes that have taken place between generations have less to do with a decline in artistic judgment than with the diminished vitality of the popular arts themselves. ♦

THE THEATRE

THE HAUNTED MENAGERIE

BY JOHN LAHR

"HAVE finished 'The Caller,' " Tennessee Williams wrote in a postscript to a friend in August, 1944, referring to "The Gentleman Caller"—a play that he had also worked up as a movie treatment and unsuccessfully pitched while he was on the M-G-M payroll doing rewrites for, among others, Lana Turner. "No doubt it goes in my reservoir of noble efforts. It is the last play I try to write for the now existing theatre." Seven months later, in March, 1945, "The Gentleman Caller," retitled "The Glass Menagerie," was produced. It became a watershed event and was the first of Williams' dramas to win a wide public. In its personal lyricism, "The Glass Menagerie" marks the theatre's evolution from polemical thirties social realism (what Williams called "the exhausted theatre of realistic conventions"), and perhaps even the transformation of the nation's collective unconscious from war-effort sacrifice to postwar self-involvement. The play, which celebrates its half century this month, with Frank Galati's fascinating production at the Roundabout, is the most transparently autobiographical of Williams' works, and dramatizes the central psychic struggle of his life: building, as he wrote in a 1941 poem, "a towering pillar of my blood / Against the siege of all that is not I." Williams had survived a brutal and indifferent father, a misguided mother, the tragedy of a beloved sister who was eventually lobotomized, a long apprenticeship, grinding poverty, his homosexual awakening. He emerged, at the age of thirty-four, as the great playwright of his time, and, indeed, of the century. After "The Glass Menagerie," which made a legend of his kingdom of self, Williams spent the rest of his life vainly trying to survive his fame.

"What a dark and bewildering thing it is, this family group," Williams wrote of his "haunted household," whose members he transformed into the Wingfields onstage. In Loy Arcenas' set, the Wingfield home is surrounded by scaffolding, as if the dingy walls were in danger of collapsing. The gray floor and the gray back wall elegantly reflect Mimi Jordan Sherin's moody light and the novelty of John Boesche's projections. (Williams' script originally called for projections, but they are rarely used.) Before the play begins, the back wall is dominated by an image of Williams as the big theatrical cookie he became: mustache, a cigarette holder in one hand, a page of dialogue in the other. Although the projected images are subtly employed, they have the cumulative effect of drawing the eye away from the immediacy of events onstage and leaching intensity from the scenes. But the image of the celebrated author is particularly apt for a play that boldly announces both Williams' power as an artist ("Yes, I have tricks in my pocket, I have things up my sleeve") and his romantic literary persona: haunted, restless, alone ("I would have stopped, but I was pursued by something"). Williams' theatrical surrogate is the narrator, Tom Wingfield (the droll and dreamy Željko Ivanek), to whom Williams gives his own first name and both his initials. The Williams family motto was "Know Your Opportunity—Seize It," and "The Glass Menagerie" dramatizes Williams' panicky attempt to do just that. "I'm planning to change," says Tom, a would-be writer, who longs to be free. Tom needs some big magic—the magic of an escape artist he's seen who managed to get out of a coffin without removing a nail. "Get me out of this 2 by 4 situation!" Tom says. At work in a St. Louis shoe warehouse, he is a wage slave lumbered by tedium, and at home he is a dutiful son lumbered by a possessive, puritanical mother, Amanda, and a shy, crippled sister, Laura. Tom is obsessed with his own momentum ("I am *about to move!*"), but domestic responsibilities threaten to stall his pursuit of self. "Self is all that you ever think of," says his long-suffering mother, who lectures him to "overcome selfishness." The play, in making a case for romantic individualism, acts out the self denied (the martyred Amanda), the self repressed (the pathologically shy Laura), and finally, in Tom's ruthless emergence as a writer, the self affirmed.

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Edwina Dakin, Tennessee Williams' mother, was the model for the long-suffering Amanda in "The Glass Menagerie," a role currently played by Julie Harris on Broadway.

"The Glass Menagerie" is dominated by the absent father ("a telephone man who fell in love with long distances"), and in most productions his photograph faces the audience throughout the evening—a permanent reminder of the family's sense of being both abandoned and stranded. Here the father is only occasionally recalled in the projections. The result is a lowering of the play's emotional temperature. In real life, Wil-

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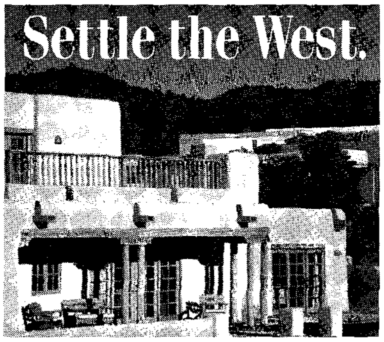

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liams' father, the womanizing and fractious C. C. Williams, a travelling salesman, certainly made the family blood boil. Williams wed Edwina Dakin, a beautiful chatterbox, in 1907; but until 1918, when Edwina and her children moved to St. Louis, the family lived with her father, a minister, in a series of Episcopalian rectories in Mississippi, with C.C. visiting a few times a month. "The Glass Menagerie" documents the family's traumatic sense of dislocation after they moved from Mississippi gentility to the anonymity of St. Louis. It was the first time that C.C. had cohabited with the family, and the first time that Edwina, now thirty-four, had had to cook. Isolated and flummoxed by their circumstances (the Williamses moved nine times during the first few years), the family floundered. They retreated, like the characters in "The Glass Menagerie," into fantasy worlds: Williams' sister, Rose, into psychotic isolation; Williams himself into his writing; and Edwina into a daydream of Southern aristocracy.

"You lost belief in everything but loss," Williams writes in the poem "Cortege," about his childhood. This same rueful sense of desperation is superbly conveyed by Julie Harris as Amanda. "Things have a way of turning out so badly," she says, her reedy voice registering heartbreaking exhaustion at the collapse of her plans for the hapless Laura (Calista Flockhart). Harris brings to the part an affecting delicacy and a shrewd dramatic intelligence. She doesn't force herself on an audience. She lets the play speak quietly through the character. Her Amanda is neither a monolithic puritan (Williams' view of Edwina) nor a deluded fool. Instead, as filtered through Harris's gentle and compassionate heart, Amanda is a decent woman whose confused vitality exhibits both resourcefulness and a kind of heroism in the face of terrible circumstances. Harris finds a sweetness in Amanda's possessiveness. Her hands don't so much clutch as flutter affectionately around Tom—patting, smoothing, caressing. She's never funnier than when pushing her agitated, romantic son ("Man is by instinct a lover, a hunter, a fighter") into a chair so that she can talk her notion of sense to him. The arc of Harris's anger is carefully plotted, reaching its powerful apogee after Tom forgets to inquire about

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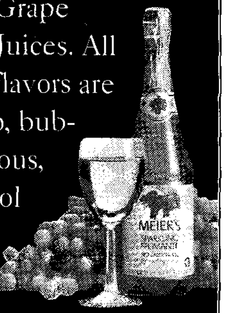

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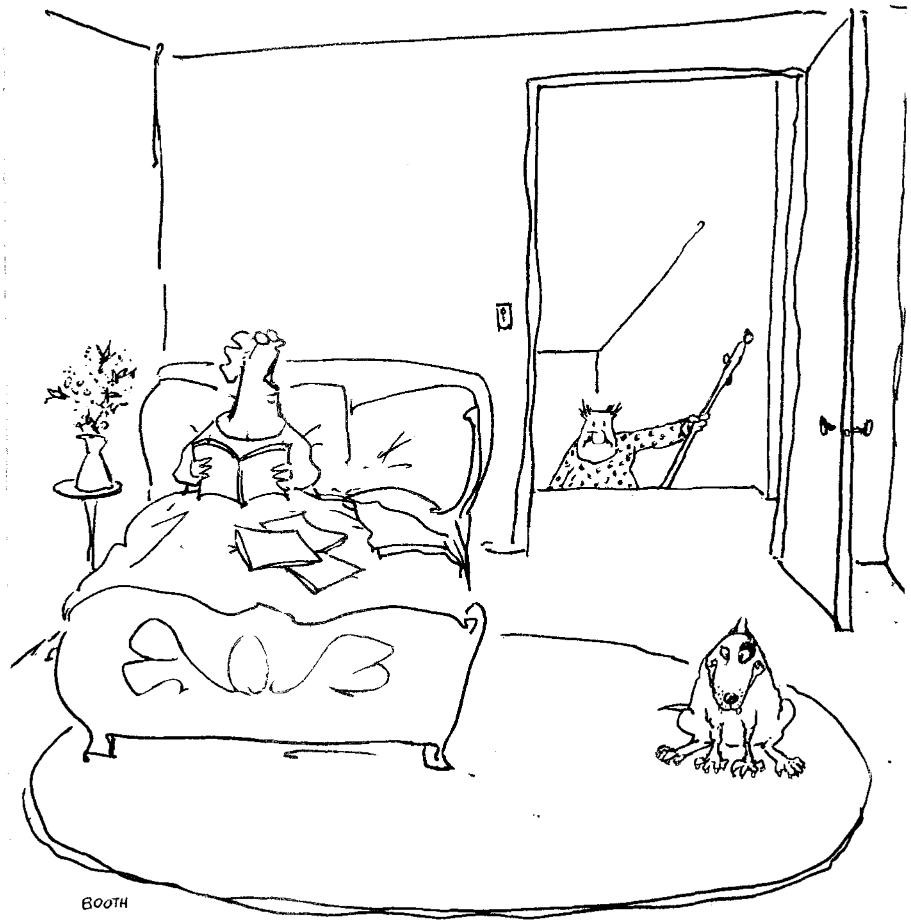
the gentleman caller's marital status. (He's engaged.) "Don't let anything interfere with your selfish pleasure! Just go, go, go—to the movies!" she shouts at Tom. "Go, then! Then go to the moon—you selfish dreamer!"

Tom's rebellion takes the form of action, but Laura's takes the form of paralysis: she's frozen, both by anger at her mother's expectations for her and by fear of her repressed sexual fantasies. When Tom arrives with Jim O'Connor (well played by Kevin Kilner, as a kind of hulk of hopefulness), Laura won't go to the door. "Why have you chosen this moment to lose your mind?" Amanda says. Laura finally lets them in, but she can't look at her guest or, later, sit at the table with him. These exquisite and excruciating moments are well staged by Galati, who uses Kilner's size (he's six feet three) to make Laura seem as small and brittle as one of the glass figurines she collects. "Look how big my shadow is when I stretch!" O'Connor says, when they are alone; and the shadow he casts is as enormous as his credulity. Laura's face is lit by the flickering glow of a candelabra. As Flockhart skillfully plays the scene, Laura is coaxed out of herself into a sudden beautiful moment of intimacy, which is just as abruptly snuffed out when Jim explains that he's spoken for.

"We can't say grace until you come to the table!" Amanda calls out to Tom at the start of the play. But they don't. Later, when the gentleman caller arrives, Amanda again mentions grace. "I think," she says, "we may—have grace—now." And they do. Laura and Jim briefly break through their solitude and make some spiritual connection. But the enduring grace that the play dramatizes is the power of the narrator's imagination to transform the blighted lives of Williams' family into beauty. "I feel that God should walk into this mellow kitchen of mine with drawn sword and just wordlessly chop my head off because I have been too fortunate compared with the female members of my doomed house," Williams, in California in 1943, wrote to a friend. His guilt and his glory



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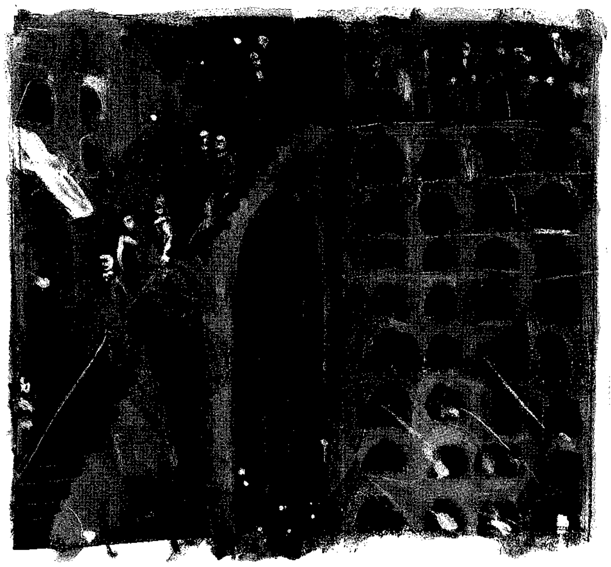
coalesce in the finale of "The Glass Menagerie," which turns loss into legend. "Now that we cannot hear the mother's speech, her silliness is gone and she has dignity and tragic beauty," the stage directions say. Even Laura smiles. "Blow out your candles," the narrator says. Laura blows out the candles. "And so good-bye. . . ." In that gesture, the romantic playwright becomes God, remaking the universe to his own requirements. "The Glass Menagerie" ends not with "good night" but with "good bye." Onstage, Williams made, if not quite peace, then a kind of truce with his past. In life he never could. ♦

THE CURRENT CINEMA

BLOOD LUST

BY TERRENCE RAFFERTY

NEIL JORDAN'S "Interview with the Vampire" is less a horror movie than a luxurious reverie on horror-movie themes. The screenplay—by Anne Rice, from her immensely popular 1976 novel—studiously avoids the conventional suspense-generating techniques of the vampire genre. The novel is, as its title implies, a behind-the-scenes story, and Rice, breathlessly exploring the intricacies of vampire mores, barely acknowledges the existence of a world outside this pale clan of nocturnal predators. She isn't much interested in the customary tension of monsters stalking their prey: in both the book and the movie, most of the victims are quickly drained and unceremoniously dumped. There are no long, agonizing campaigns to lure coy virgins into bloodsucking range. Even the primmest character—the narrator, Louis (played by Brad Pitt)—succumbs almost immediately to the toothy charm of his seducer, Lestat (Tom Cruise). And once Louis and Lestat, soon after their wild night together, become an established vampire couple, moving in the high society of New Orleans in the seventeen-nineties, their peace is rarely disturbed by any external force; no one seems to be investigating the murders they're committing (two or three a night, we're told), and there aren't any white-haired, German-accented vampirologists panting after them with garlic, holy water, crucifixes, and large wooden stakes.



"Interview with the Vampire": Neil Jordan's undead buddy picture.

In a way, it's daring of Rice and Jordan to try to purge the vampire myth of its familiar melodramatic elements. "Interview with the Vampire" is clearly meant to represent some sort of pure essence of vampirism, but the genre isn't really robust enough to survive the loss of its crude narrative conventions and its corny religious symbolism. Without the chases, the incantations, the lurking, the skulking, the sinister flutter of bat wings, and the swoons of milky-necked maidens, what's left? In this case, nothing but swanky atmosphere and endless elaborations of the genre's obvious eroticism.

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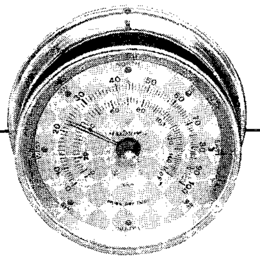

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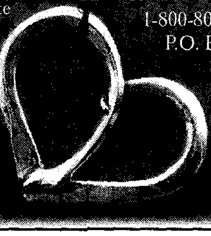

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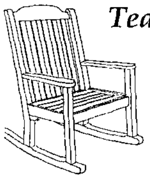

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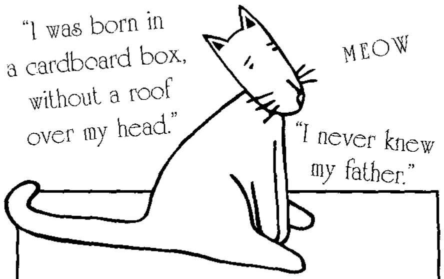
Vampirism as a metaphor for sexual voracity isn't exactly a fresh take. (And neither, for that matter, is the homoeroticism of the relationship between Louis and Lestat: in J. S. Le Fanu's classic 1872 story "Carmilla" the mutual attraction of the vampire and the victim is unmistakably lesbian.) "Interview with the Vampire" is convincing evidence that in popular genres subtext should stay where it belongs—underground. If it's brought out into the light, it shrivels and dies.

Jordan and his cinematographer, the great Philippe Rousselot, have given the movie an extraordinarily seductive look—a fairy-tale darkness, in which danger and pleasure appear equally alluring. For a while, "Interview with the Vampire" holds our attention with its voluptuous surfaces and a languorous, dreamlike rhythm—intensified by the droning voice-over narration of Louis, who is telling his story to a young stranger (played by Christian Slater) in present-day San Francisco. But before long we begin to yearn for something more solid, a little meat-and-potatoes storytelling to help us absorb the rich, thick stream of images our eyes are taking in. The writer, however, doesn't provide the filmmakers with anything to satisfy the viewer's hunger for basic narrative. Her vampires are so isolated—so rigorously abstracted from any sort of context, social or religious—that there really isn't much for them to do except go on their nightly rounds and squabble among themselves. In the first part of the picture, Louis and Lestat just suck and bicker, suck and bicker, in scene after scene. Initially, their arguments revolve around Louis's reluctance to drink human blood; Lestat, who tears into his victims with unabashed delight, considers his friend's attitude priggish and self-deluding, and keeps goading him to accept his nature and have some fun. Later, the vampires fight for parental control over Claudia (Kirsten Dunst), a pretty little girl whom they have taken into their household (and turned into a vampire). Finally, Louis and Claudia flee to Europe; in Paris, they become embroiled in the politics and petty jealousies of the Old World vampire aristocracy, which is presided over by a dashing four-hundred-year-old named Armand (Antonio Banderas). In dramatic terms, this insider's perspective on the bloodsucking subculture is suicidal: the spectacle of well-dressed, deathly-white creatures scheming and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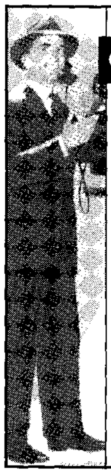

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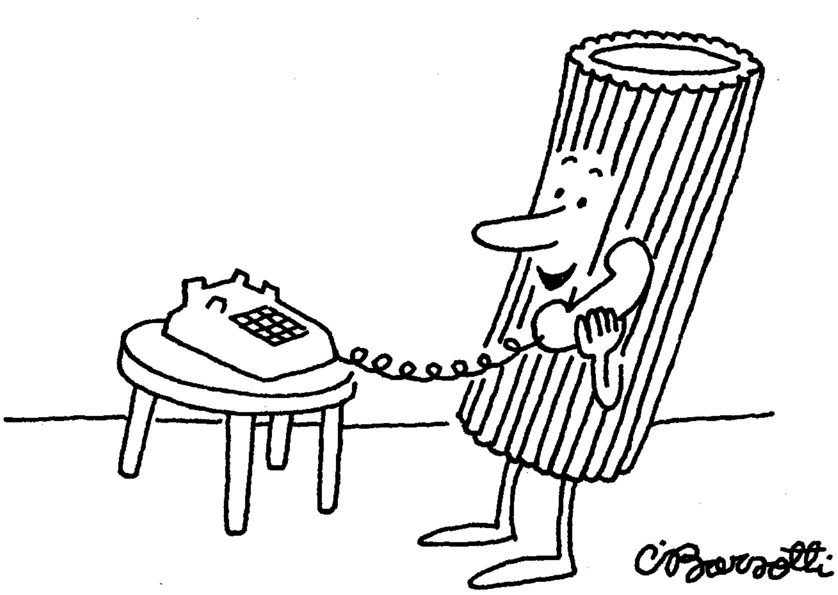


"Fusilli, you crazy bastard! How are you?"

• •

posturing and struggling for power is appalling but stubbornly unexciting, like a Republican Convention.

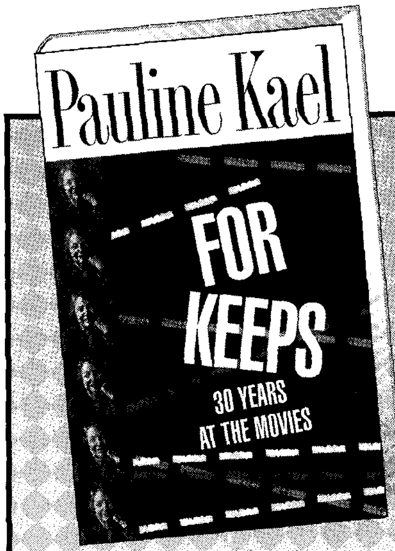
The only way to make this material work would be to treat it as comedy. It *is* sort of amusing that the main settings are New Orleans and Paris—cities famous for their indulgence of sensuality, and therefore places where the sybaritic undead can blend right in. But Rice and Jordan don't use the perverse appropriateness of the settings ironically; the extravagant physical beauty of New Orleans and Paris is just exotic décor, an ornate frame for high-toned romantic decadence. (Rice clearly has no inclination to tinker with the aristocratic trappings of the vampire story; it's the one genre convention that she's absolutely unself-conscious about.) And the relationship between the conscience-stricken Louis and the exuberant, insatiable party boy Lestat should be much funnier. You sense that Jordan does see the humor in this grotesque parody of a marriage, but he manages to deliver only a handful of comic jolts. He doesn't have the right actors. Pitt is relentlessly dour and inexpressive. He's so monotonous that it's impossible to sympathize with Louis's moral qualms, and difficult even to laugh at them, which is what we really want to do: this poor soul has the most persistent case of morning-after regret—two hundred years and counting—in the history of the movies, and Pitt doesn't seem to be in on the joke. Cruise's performance is livelier and more intelligent, and he certainly looks the part: he has limp blond hair, hollowed-out cheeks, and a big, alarmingly chilly smile—he's dissipation incarnate. Unfortunately, the effect of the role depends on a quality that Cruise just doesn't have: a sense of spontaneity, of abandon. Lestat is a creature of impulse, a willing slave to his enormous appetites, but Cruise's acting style is conscientious and tightly controlled. Although the performance is skillful, it doesn't quite work. Lestat, who is meant to embody the pleasure principle in all its unruly, terrifying glory, finally doesn't seem different enough from his overscrupulous mate. Cruise can make us understand the contrast, but he's not the sort of actor who can make us feel it.

The whole movie suffers from a similar air of remoteness. It's astonishingly imaginative visually, and its violent scenes (there are many) have a heavy, unnervingly vivid sensuality that goes farther than any previous vampire film has dared to. But Neil Jordan has done it all before, in erotic fairy tales like "The Company of Wolves" and "The Miracle," and in romantic thrillers like "Mona Lisa" and "The Crying Game." In "Interview with the Vampire" he has succeeded in adapting the nocturnal-poetic style of his low-budget movies to the larger canvas of an expensive Hollywood horror epic, but his virtuosity can't disguise the movie's emptiness. Early on, Lestat tells Louis to look at the world through "vampire eyes," and, although the film never explicitly shares that perspective with us, the camera's own detached, clinical gaze gives us some idea of what that vision must be like. Gorgeous as "Interview with the Vampire" is, it seems weary, jaded, disturbingly practiced, as if it had been hitting the same vein for too long. Without the thrill of the chase, seduction is just another kind of consumption, and the romantic allure of the vampire seems like nothing but a slick come-on, a travesty of passion. "Interview with the Vampire" doesn't sweep you off your feet, because you sense that it's looking right through you.

THE New Zealand film "Heavenly Creatures" tells the true story of a pair of Christchurch teen-agers, Pauline Parker (Melanie Lynskey) and Juliet Hulme (Kate Winslet), who murdered Pauline's mother, Honora (Sarah Peirse), in 1954. (This case, a famous one in New Zealand, received worldwide publicity earlier this year, when the well-known mystery writer Anne Perry revealed that she was in fact Juliet Hulme.) The movie, like "Interview with the Vampire," focusses on a desperately unhealthy relationship and tries to explore the nature of the connection between love and violence; what happens to these imaginative girls is a real-life illustration of vampire bonding. Pauline and Juliet have the sort of passionate friendship that unhappy adolescents are prone to: it's a union that begins with shared interests and mutual infatuation but develops into an embattled us-against-the-world alliance. Like Louis and Lestat, they're so obsessed with each other that nothing outside the hermetic little universe of their relationship has any reality for them. And the feeling that other people don't count is a handy rationale for murder; Honora Parker dies because she threatens to break up the girls' friendship, to tear down the idyllic refuge that they've created for themselves.

Pauline Parker's diaries, which are quoted in the movie's voice-over narration, indicate that she actually saw herself and Juliet Hulme as examples of a rare, superior species; the phrase "heavenly creatures" is hers, and she doesn't intend it ironically. What makes the story so powerfully suggestive is that the girls' relationship illuminates some startling, and painfully recognizable, features of the landscape of adolescent despair. Bright, lonely teen-agers like Pauline and Juliet do tend to wear their enthusiasms as armor against adults and insensitive peers. These girls elaborate their crushes on celebrities—James Mason, Orson Welles, and, preëminently, Mario Lanza—into what is virtually a secret religion, a cult whose rigid doctrines only they understand. They collaborate on operas and florid novels, and address each other by the names of their characters; occasionally, they retreat to a fantasy kingdom, which they call the Fourth World and seem to regard as a realm of lofty spirituality. Like teen-age aesthetes everywhere, they use their tastes as a way of separating themselves from the herd. This is not an attractive personality type, and sharing such delusions of grandeur with someone else only makes matters worse; Pauline and Juliet, by nurturing each other's worst impulses, turn ordinary adolescent obnoxiousness into a dangerous kind of narcissism.

Unfortunately, the director of "Heavenly Creatures," Peter Jackson (who co-wrote the screenplay with Frances Walsh), films the story as the girls themselves, at the height of their hysteria, might have filmed it. The movie's style is frenzied, hyperbolic, and curiously uncritical of the heroines' feverish perspective on the world around them. Jackson portrays all the adults who don't understand the sensitive girls—parents, teachers, doctors—as grotesque cartoons of authority, and bathes the heroines' early scenes together in a romantic, soft-focus glow; he even tries to show us the Fourth World, and presents it in the candy-colored style of storybook illustrations. (It looks pretty cheesy, but we're clearly meant to be entranced.) In effect, "Heavenly Creatures" tends to validate the teen-agers' warped perspective—to glamorize their art-fuelled contempt for ordinary people and everyday life. Jackson treats the young murderers with a rather suspicious tenderness, as if he were hoping to be invited into their sect. With the director tagging along faithfully behind Pauline and Juliet, this folie à deux turns into a disastrous folie à trois. Jackson doesn't seem to realize that the real significance of this story is the couple's perfect, inviolable self-sufficiency. These two kids are scary company; three's a crowd. ♦



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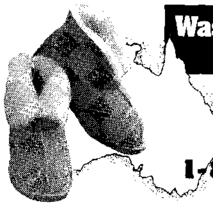

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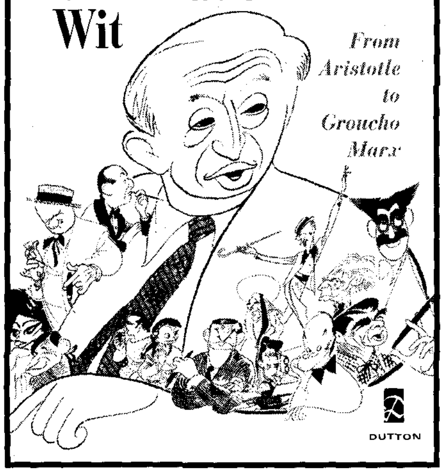

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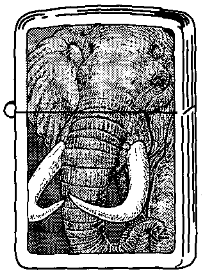

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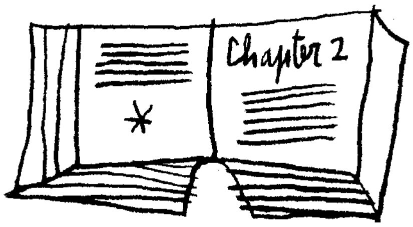

BOOKS BRIEFLY NOTED

GENERAL

Representations of the Intellectual
by Edward W. Said
(Pantheon; $20)

A FIERCELY assertive description of the intellectual as an oppositional figure, presented as a series of warnings about the various threats to integrity and independence that the modern intellectual confronts. Among the seducers are the claim of nationalism, the sentiment of group solidarity, the narrowness and pedantry of specialization, the all-explaining authority of systems and theories, and, most insidious, the temptation to exercise power rather than criticize it. Since Said is himself one of the most widely known intellectuals in the world, and has written and spoken as a supporter of the Palestinian cause, his argument not only draws on his own rich and unusual experience but occasionally runs up against that experience in inconvenient ways. The subject of commitment, in particular, engages him in some tricky reasoning. Because he wants his intellectual to balance disinterestedness and independence with passion and engagement, he posits a kind of universal division between the powerful, toward whom the intellectual is adversarial, and the oppressed, for whom the intellectual voices sympathy. But most situations don't conform to this model, so the choice between criticism and commitment is unlikely to be quite so straightforward. Yet how many contemporary intellectuals have the standing to raise these matters? This is a bracing and heartfelt reconsideration of a cultural type too infrequently encountered in a society in which being an "intellectual" has come to mean earning a living by reiterating slogans in highly publicized shouting matches with other "intellectuals."

A Critic's Notebook
by Irving Howe
(Harcourt Brace; $27.95)

THIS collection of essays about fiction is ideal literary criticism, at once wise and entertaining. Howe never uses his vast reading to show off or to awe the reader but, rather, dips into the corpus of Western novels to contrast the way we read now with the way people read in the past, or to discuss the elusiveness of goodness, demonstrating the difficulties that novelists encounter in portraying virtuous characters and the near-impossibility that critics face when they try to elucidate the highest artistic achievement. Howe can take—and share—pleasure in imperfect works, and he rarely lays down the law, since he understands that every one of his readers will have a slightly different response to whatever novel or author he is discussing. The book is unified by Howe's assumption that the reading and writing of fiction matter, and it sparkles with the sense that serious works are somehow fun. Howe, who died last year, is a voice we miss, but he has left us a book to cherish.

VERSE

The Great Fires: Poems 1982-1992
by Jack Gilbert
(Knopf; $20)

THIS is Gilbert's third book of poems in thirty years. (His last volume, "Monolithos," appeared in 1982; his first, "Views of Jeopardy," in 1962.) For much of this time, he has been living in Greece and Italy, and has hammered out a strong lyric voice whose classical range transmits, like reverberations in stone, a Senecan authority. Senecan, too, is Gilbert's enduring interest in the plight of Orpheus, who in a poem here "goes on / secretly with his ruined alto." Many of the poems are about the death of the poet's wife, and most address the way love, through death or disinclination, vanishes. One four-part poem charts with holographic precision the trajectory in space and time of Dante's desire for Beatrice. Gilbert's own geography includes not only the olives and lemons of southern Europe but the smoke of Pittsburgh, where he was born. The city surfaces in these poems like the "dreadful" fish in "Going Wrong," which are "beautiful / and alien and cold from night under the sea, / the grand rooms fading from their flat eyes."

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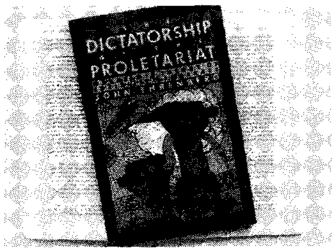

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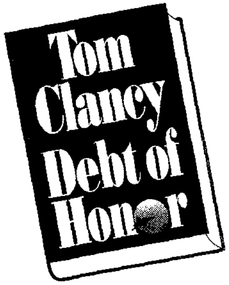

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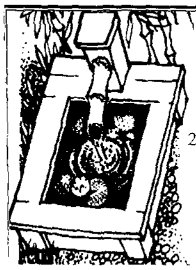

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Winter Numbers
by Marilyn Hacker
(Norton; $17.95)

FAMOUS for the cheeky sensuality of her lesbian love poems, Marilyn Hacker has always played with the erotic possibilities of French forms. Her villanelles, ballades, and rondels, with their sly refrains, have generally searched out the sexiness of the domestic. But in this volume, her seventh, Hacker explores a darker side of daily life. The mugs of tea at the kitchen table, the dizzying love affairs that were the cozy fixtures of so many earlier poems have yielded to more urgent matters: news of friends with AIDS or cancer, the collaborationist past of the poet's Paris neighborhood, her own breast cancer. Hacker has always been a technically accomplished poet, but here that aptitude is deepened by a steely anti-sentimentality. "Unremarkable," she writes. "I woke up, still alive."

For That Day Only
by Grace Schulman
(Sheep Meadow; $19.95)

SCHULMAN'S beautiful poems are deft and intimate without ever becoming confessional. There are poems of marital bliss and woe, poems about works of art, poems on ancestral or historical themes—the raw poignancy of "Grandfather Dave, an immigrant, a Jew," along with the Washington Square of Henry James. The sacred realm of god and myth and the mundane one of error and expulsion unite and resound in both classical and contemporary ways. In these "tales of Creation," the emotional or dramatic import is typically set between the "altering light" of an earthly fragmentation and the heavenly pursuit of the "world in one glance"—the recognition of an ultimate coherence, the belief that "as things fade to live . . . loss / makes trees grow green." Clarity of idea and clarity of sound, rhythms equally at home in formal and in blank verse meet in an idiom that is perfected to a chiselled resonance. ◆

FROM OUR PAGES

(Part of this recently published book originally appeared in The New Yorker.)

The Wild Party
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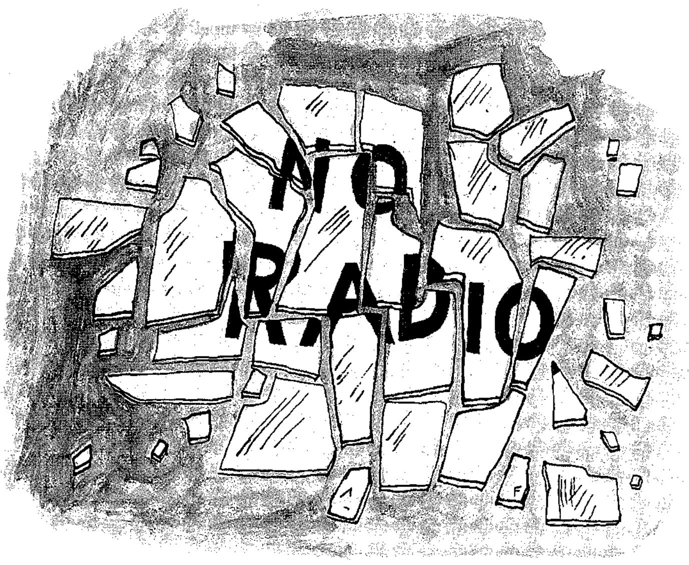
PAPER TRIALS

BY CALVIN TRILLIN

FOR people who make their livings as writers, the routine messages of everyday life have to be put together with some care. You don’t want to leave rough drafts lying around. I’ve known novelists for whom the prospect of composing a note asking that a son or daughter be excused from gym that day can bring on a serious case of writer’s block.

I was reminded of this recently when our car had to be left on city streets for a few days, and, attempting to benefit from the experience of a couple of trips in the past to AAAA Aardvark Auto-Glass Repair, I took on the task of composing a sign to inform potential pillagers that it contained nothing of value. Hours later, my wife happened to ask me to do some little chore around the house and I heard myself saying, “I can’t right now. I’m on the fourth draft of this car sign.”

There was no reason for her to be surprised. She has seen me stuck badly on an R.S.V.P. In fact, a routine piece of social communication can be particularly knotty for writers, since they habitually try to express themselves in ways that are not overly familiar. This is why a biographer who seems capable of producing a twelve-hundred-page Volume I in fairly short order can often be inexcusably late with, say, a simple thank-you note. Reading over what he’s put on paper, he’ll say to himself, “I can’t believe that I wrote anything as lame as ‘Thanks for a wonderful weekend.’ ” Then he’ll put aside the entire thank-you-note project until a fresher phrase comes to mind. A few weeks later, while the draft is still marinating on the writer’s desk, the weekend’s hostess feels confirmed in her impression—an impression that began to surface with the wine-spilling incident on Saturday night—that the biographer is a boor or a yahoo.



What my fourth draft of the car sign said was “No Radio.” I thought that was spare and to the point, without extraneous language. I came to it from “No Radio or Any Other Valuables,” which I decided, after some reflection, protested too much.

“What do you think?” I asked my wife, handing her the sign.

“It’s O.K.,” my wife said. “I saw some ready-made signs for car windows at the hardware store, and that’s what one of them said, so I guess it’s what people think is effective.”

“You saw the same sign—worded in just that way?”

“I’m not saying you plagiarized it from the hardware store.”

“Actually, I haven’t been in there in some time,” I said.

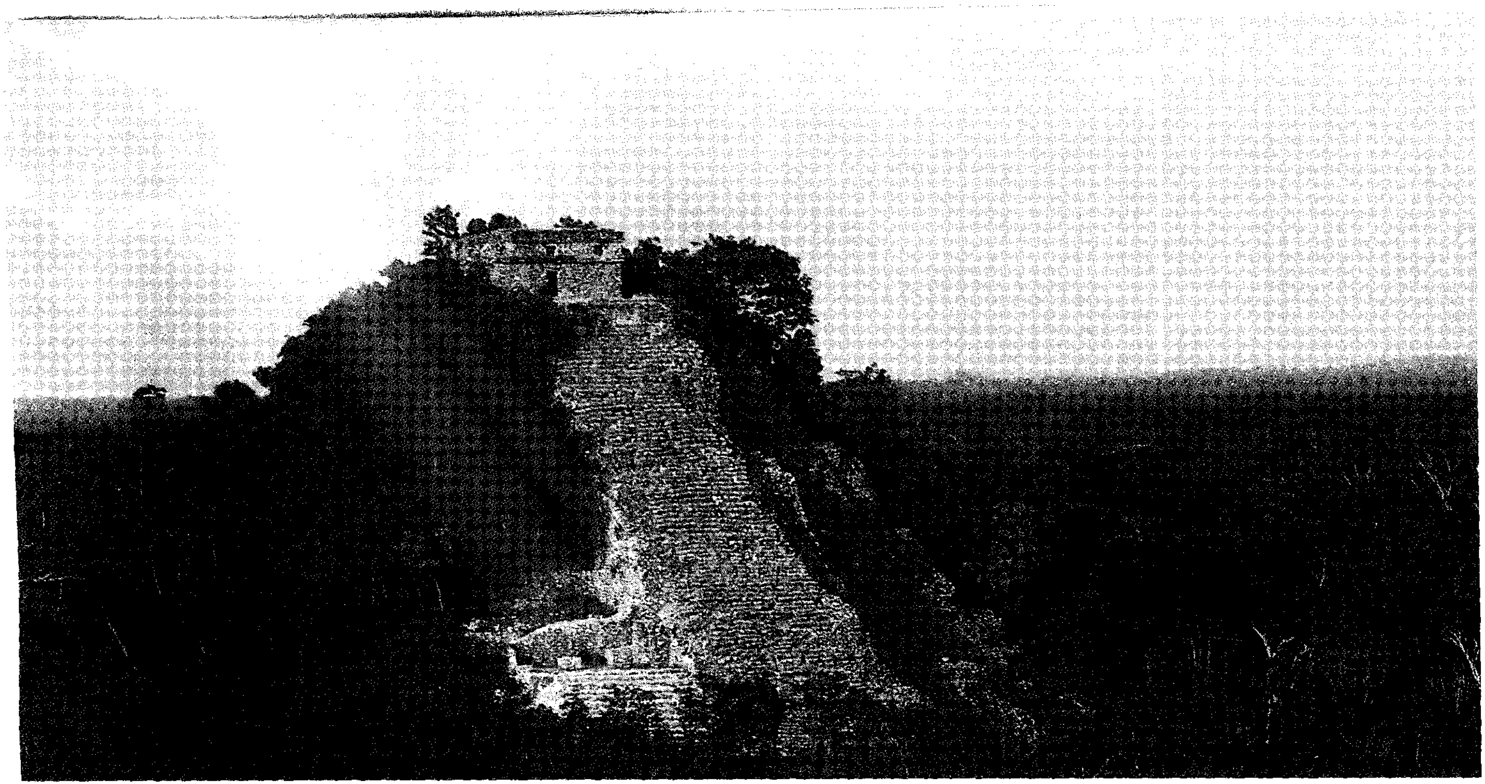
“It’s really O.K.,” my wife said. “ ‘No Radio’ is fine.”

It’s fine if you’re satisfied to be writing at the same level as some gorilla at the sign factory. Thinking I needed fresh ideas, I phoned my older daughter, who lives just around the corner. “What would be a good sign to put in the car to discourage crackheads from smashing the window so they can get at six cents in change on the floor and the spare fan belt and an old pair of pliers?” I asked.

My daughter, a survivor of one of those earnest and progressive nursery schools in the Village, said, “How about ‘Use Words Not Hands’?” This was a reference to what the teachers at her nursery school were constantly saying as the little monsters attacked one another with any weapon available. At one point, we all began to wonder exactly what the words for sneaking up behind another kid and pulling her hair might be.

It wouldn’t surprise me at all if that hair puller had turned to a life of petty crime. Much as I enjoyed contemplating the look on his face when he spotted his nursery-school slogan on a car he was about to break into, I decided that the impact of “Use Words Not Hands” rested on the sort of allusion that an editor would criticize as “too inside.”

The next draft was a complete departure—more of a new approach, really, than just another draft. It said, “There Is Nothing of Value Here.” Upon reflection, I decided that it sounded too philosophical. I could picture a car thief who came upon it turning to his partner in crime and saying, “Talk about pretentious!” So now I’m sort of stuck. Meanwhile, the car’s on the street. It is not completely without protection. An old shirt cardboard taped onto the back window bears the words “Sign in Preparation.” ♦



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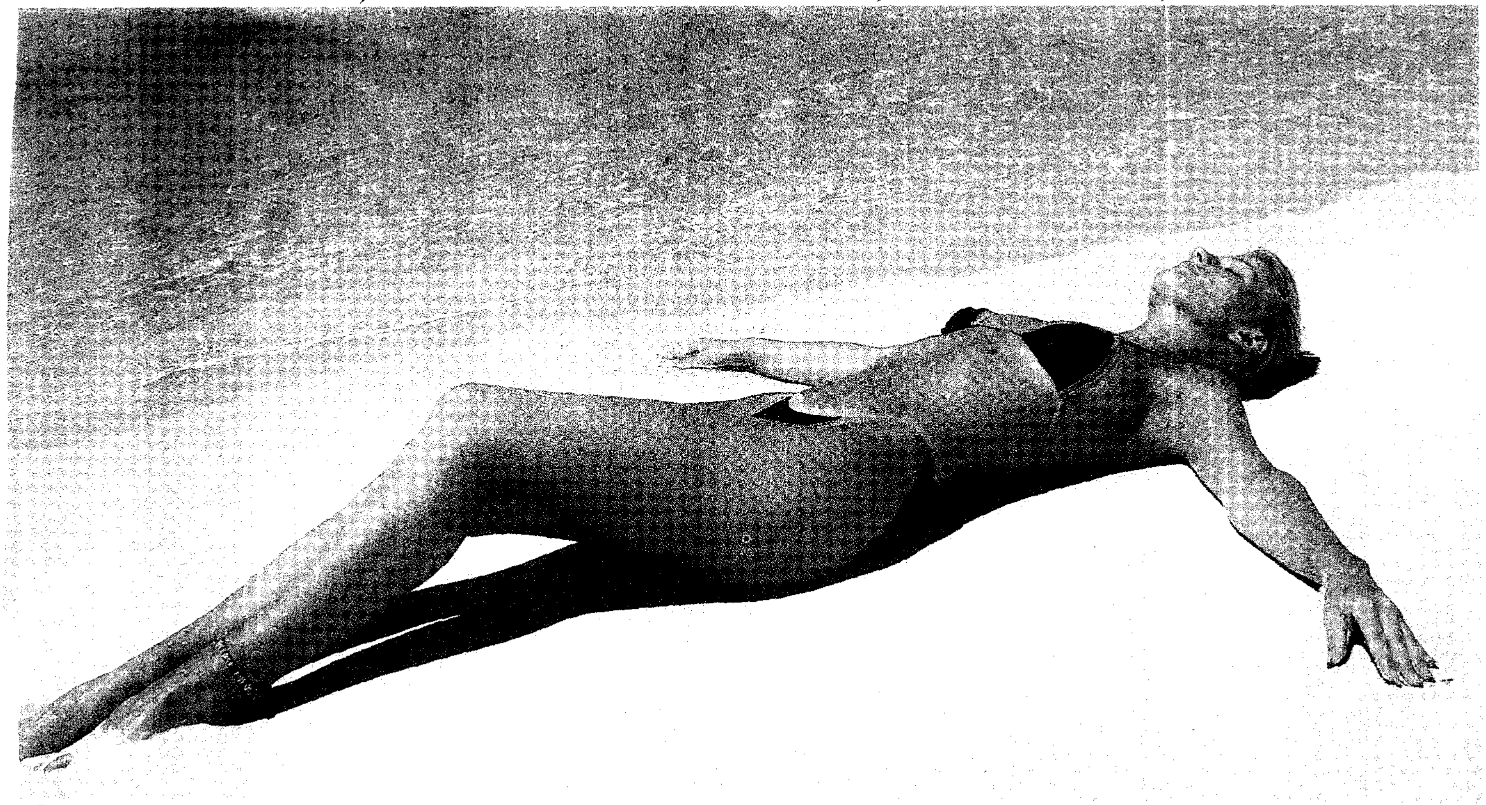

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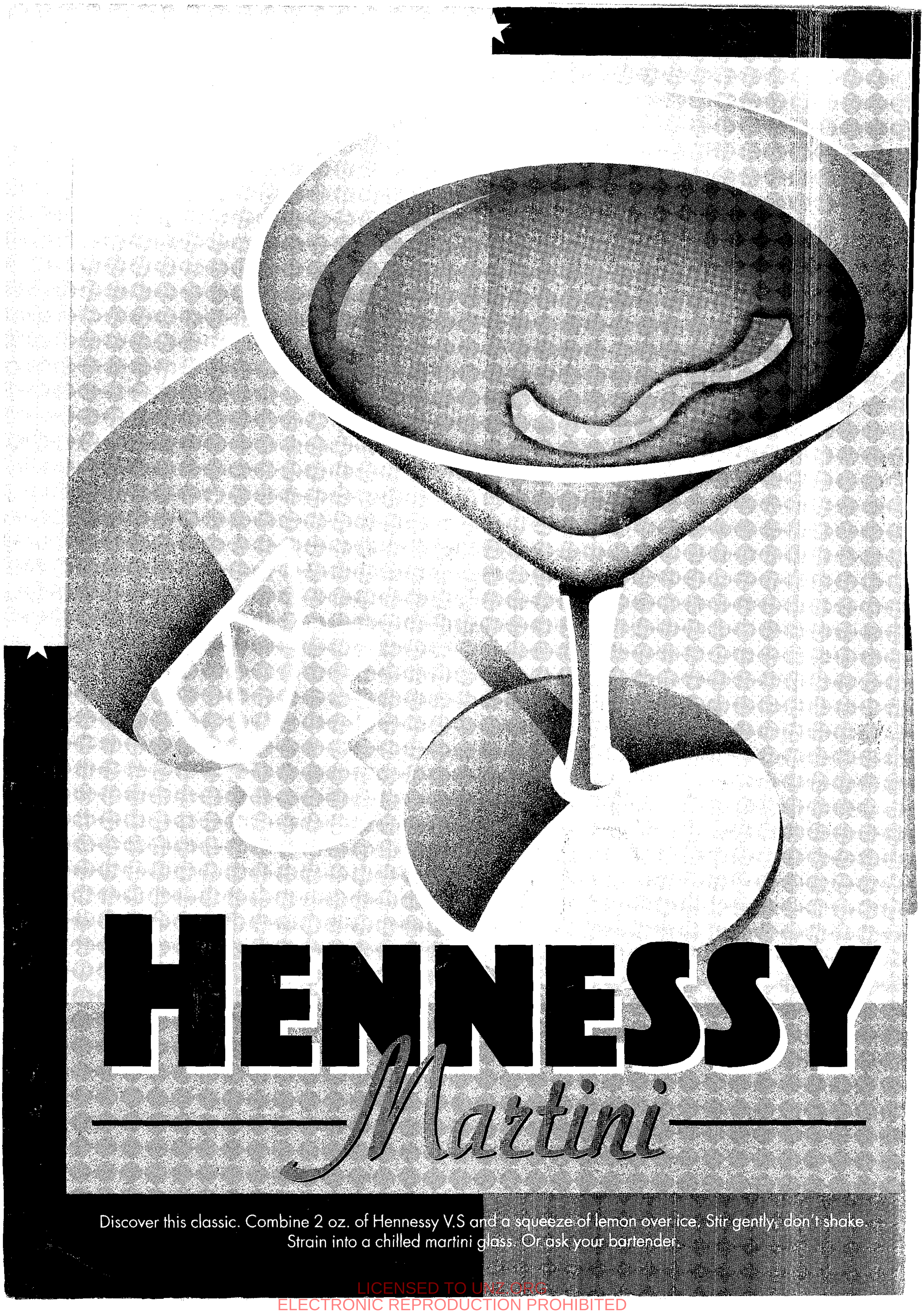
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